

THE LABOUR COMMISSION.

IN ordinary times we should have expected as much harm as good from the decision of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the relations of employers and employed. So often is a Commission a grave wherein to bury a disturbing question. And such may still be the history of the Labour Commission. But these are not ordinary times; we are in the full stream of an industrial revolution. We welcome the decision, whatever may be the motives, and only hope that the Commission will be catholic in its composition, that it will not be swamped with Right Honourables, and that it will include men such as Tillet, General Booth, and one or two trusted secretaries of great trade unions. The Government have done their best to discredit the report of the Committee on the Hours of Railway Servants by denying the men a fair representation. The Labour Commission will be stultified at the outset, if the selection of its members be not made with some boldness. There will be no harm if it contains an economical purist hating trade unions as heartily as Lord Grimthorpe; only let the Left Wing also of economists be fully represented. From the report of any Commission are not to be expected many new facts, far less a set of clear, consistent suggestions ready to be placed in the Government draftsman's hands to be embodied in a Bill. But the inquiry need not for that reason be barren. The last commission of the kind, the Labour Laws Commission of 1867—9, was beneficial, if only because it educated public opinion. The old prejudices against trade unionism—the belief that men of the stamp of Broadhead were representatives of its spirit—did not outlive that inquiry; and it is possible that the equally strong prejudices against the New Trade Unionism—the belief that it is embodied indolence and tyranny—may be destroyed or weakened by a new inquiry. We are all trade unionists, said Professor Jevons; we all may be on the point of admitting it.

What should be the precise scope of the investigation we do not pretend to say. It may be proper to exclude Employers' Liability, the Factory Acts, and Friendly Societies Acts; probably it will be found that many other matters of great importance must be passed over. But at least three groups of questions must be dealt with. Foremost is the question of the Eight Hours Working Day. It will be at least possible to obtain better evidence than we now have of the wishes of working men themselves. The only available figures of much value are those submitted to the Dundee Trades Union Congress in 1889, and they were based on the answers of an insignificant number of trade societies. Even if the Commission does no more than collect such facts, if it throws little light on the more difficult problems as to the condition of different industries and the obstacles to legislative interference, it will not have sat in vain. A second group of questions may be described as the international bearings of labour. Hitherto diplomacy has rarely concerned itself with industry. The utmost it has done is to negotiate treaties of commerce, and to make the best terms possible for the entrance of commodities into foreign countries. But labour also has its claims on diplomacy. Obviously many objections to salutary regulations of industry are removed if they become international agreements. It may be hard, for example, to put an English manufacturer under terms as to the dimensions of his workrooms and the hours of working, if his rivals at Rouen or Mulhausen are free from all restraint, and before the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade much was heard

of this grievance; it may be very reasonable to impose such conditions in the interest of workers if producers all over Europe fare alike. We are not now suggesting the possibility of a *Tugendbund*, some new Holy Alliance in the interest of labour; we have in view the fact that many obstacles to gratifying the reasonable aspirations of working men would disappear if only there was agreement between rival producing nations as to the great lines of legislation, that good seed was sown at the Berlin Labour Conference, and that the new Commission might water and nurture it. Under a third group fall all the interesting questions as to the possibility of averting by arbitration or otherwise the strikes which now paralyse so many industries. No economist or statistician has yet endeavoured to compute the loss to society by the strikes which have marked the last two years. Looking only to recent strikes affecting the shipping trade, and the facts stated the other day by the chairman of the General Steam Navigation Company, Mr. Herbert Tritton, can it be less than £10,000,000? May it not be in excess of this sum? And must this waste continue? We need no Royal Commission to remind us of the conclusive objections to a scheme for the State intervening with its strong hand in such disputes. But it may well be that Boards of Conciliation, with no other power in the last resort than the moral influence of their decisions, would prevent some strikes and shorten others. The fact that the North of England Board of Conciliation and Arbitration for the iron trade has in seventeen years adjusted some eight hundred disputes is an earnest of what may be done by prearranged modes of determining differences between employers and employed. Even if the Report of the Commission be for a time as barren of legislative results as that of the Commission on the Depression of Trade proved, it will help to educate opinion. No economist of our time had thought more deeply over the relations of the State to labour than the late Professor Jevons. The conclusion to which he comes, in his book on the subject, is that we must distrust general theories, that we must carefully study the conditions of each industry, and act accordingly. Such is the conclusion of most thoughtful observers, and in that mood they welcome a Commission of Inquiry, which may at least prove a solvent of prejudices, nowhere more deeply rooted than among the so-called educated classes.

THE POLITICAL PROSPECT.

IT is hardly necessary for English Liberals to trouble themselves over the speeches of Mr. Parnell. That gentleman is still bent upon doing the work of Mr. Balfour in Ireland, and if it were within his power to compass it, no Home Rule Bill would be possible during the lifetime of the present generation. But we may leave the Member for Cork, with his wild appeals to the men of the hillside and his rather mean attempts to poll in his own favour a man who is now in prison, but whose latest utterances were decisively hostile to himself, to the tender mercies of the Unionist party. He is sure of being well reported in the *Times* if nowhere else, and equally sure of finding a sympathetic and appreciative audience among those who are the avowed friends of coercion. The Liberal party in Great Britain has more serious matters with which to concern itself than the performances of the ex-Irish leader. On all sides testimony accumulates in favour of the conclusion that the next general election—whether it takes place this year or next year—will see the decisive

defeat of the coalition now in power, and the return of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues to office. No one can read Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham last Saturday without seeing that this fact is uppermost even in that gentleman's mind. We have, therefore, to look forward to the prospect of a Liberal majority in the House of Commons and a divided Irish representation. What, under such circumstances, will be the course of the Liberal party? Mr. Chamberlain makes merry over the prospect, and jeeringly asks how any Government can call upon Parliament to accept a Home Rule scheme which the majority of the Irish people reject? It was surely a waste of strength on his part to discuss such a question. Nobody knows better than he does that neither Mr. Gladstone nor any member of his party would dream of proposing a Home Rule scheme which was unacceptable to the Irish people as a whole. But the notion that Mr. Parnell and his hillside men and the Orangemen of Ulster constitute a majority of the inhabitants of Ireland, is too absurd to be seriously discussed; and hardly less absurd, though infinitely more contemptible, is the argument which Mr. Chamberlain seeks to base upon the character of the Irish representatives as a whole. In his opinion not one of these gentlemen is to be trusted any more than Mr. Parnell; all will prove false to their allies, and traitors to their country, when it suits them to do so. We shall not stoop to discuss a libel so outrageous; but would merely remind the member for Birmingham that it is the custom in England to consider men innocent until their guilt has been proved. It will be time enough to discuss the treachery and duplicity of the Irish party when their treachery and duplicity have been shown to exist. For the present we are satisfied that in Mr. McCarthy and the men who surround him the English Liberals have allies as loyal and devoted as they could wish for. But even though it were not so, and the Irish representatives, under stress of what they believed to be their duty, were to break from their alliance with the Liberal party in this country, there is not the smallest reason to suppose that they would at the same time turn traitors to the cause which they specially represent. This is the great offence of which Mr. Parnell has been guilty, and it is one so rare that we might well have imagined that Mr. Chamberlain, for the very credit of human nature itself, would not have been in haste to impute it to other men. Perhaps, however, Mr. Chamberlain allows himself to be misled by Mr. Parnell's bold attempts to deceive both his own countrymen and the politicians of England. In that case, although we cannot think much of the sagacity of the member for Birmingham, we can understand the error into which he has fallen. For it must be confessed that in mendacity as well as effrontery, Mr. Parnell and his friends have reached a point never before attained. We have spoken of the deliberate misrepresentation of Mr. O'Brien's views, and now we see that the London correspondent of one of the Dublin newspapers, by an equally deliberate misrepresentation of the views of a well-known member of Parliament, Mr. Brunner, is seeking to convince the Irish people that the best friends of Ireland in this country are with Mr. Parnell. With falsehoods of this description flying about, we ought not, perhaps, to be surprised at the fact that even Mr. Chamberlain allows himself to be gulled.

The Liberal party, there is every reason to believe, has been unshaken by the rude tumult of the past three months. It has seen one colossal act of disloyalty and bad faith. It has parted company with one man of distinguished abilities, but abnormal selfishness; but it has not seen in Mr. Parnell's treason any reason for wavering in

the support it has given to Mr. Gladstone, or in its desire to see the government of Ireland reformed both in root and in branch. This is the striking fact which faces politicians at the present moment. We had a right to expect loyalty and sincerity on the part of those who, five years ago, went into the wilderness with their leader, rather than desert him in what they believed to be a just and holy cause. But the reality has far surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the leaders of the party. For it is now made clear that the Parnellite disruption has actually given new strength and life to the Liberal party in England and Scotland. Indeed, one notable result of the negotiations and revelations, of one sort and another, which have attended Mr. Parnell's dismissal from the leadership of his party, has been the establishment of the fact that Mr. Gladstone's scheme of Home Rule has never had the character attributed to it by its enemies. Even Mr. T. W. Russell will now hardly venture to assert that it is a scheme for the disruption of the Empire or the overthrow of the supremacy of Parliament. It remains what it was in 1886—a scheme for conferring upon the Irish people the largest measure of self-government compatible with the maintenance of the unity of the Empire. The full establishment of this fact, which was never doubted by real Liberals, has reassured not a few timid souls who were led away by the loud outcries of the upholders of Coercion, and the consequence is that the party in favour of a pacific solution of the Irish question has been strengthened rather than weakened as the result of recent events.

The Liberal party is therefore preparing for the coming general election with a degree of hopefulness which contrasts strikingly with the discouragement of the Unionists, and even the fulfilment of the gloomiest predictions of the prophet of Birmingham would hardly discourage it; for, after all, though justice to Ireland is much, it is not everything, and the Liberal programme when the general election arrives will certainly not be limited to a single article. Our purpose will be to arrive at a settlement which, whilst satisfactory to the Irish people, will be both safe and honourable to the people of Great Britain. We believe that when the critical moment comes, neither Mr. Parnell nor the Orangemen of Ulster nor the English Tories will be able to prevent such a settlement. The Irish people have shown themselves during the Home Rule conflict to be eminently practical, and we have every reason to anticipate that, on their side at least, there will be no real difficulty in the acceptance of a solution of the problem which will be honourable to both countries. But if our hopes were not to be realised, and through the unhappy division in their ranks the Irish representatives were to reject the proposals of a Liberal House of Commons, the members of that House, so far from being, as Mr. Chamberlain anticipates, overwhelmed by the blow, would turn to other work, and carry out a programme which, though it may begin, certainly does not end with the cry of "Justice for Ireland." The feverish anxiety which the members and supporters of the present Government are showing to forestall their opponents in the adoption of a programme of social reform, affords a fair measure of the dread with which they anticipate the return of Mr. Gladstone to power. For they know full well that the past five years, like most periods of Tory supremacy in England, have been years in which the public mind has been ripening quickly upon many great questions closely affecting the welfare of society. It is this knowledge which leads them to make haste to anticipate Liberal reforms by offering reforms of their own. Happily, the English people have learned

by the experience of the past what value to place upon schemes of this kind. The "Whigs" have been "dished" too often by hungry and conscienceless office-seekers to allow us to remain under any doubt as to the true character of the "dishing" process. The next House of Commons will, we trust and believe, witness the great act of reconciliation between England and Ireland; but whether this be the case or not, it will unquestionably see the introduction of many great measures of social reform by the party which, throughout its history, has been the only real friend of reform in this country.

THE COMPLAINT OF THOMAS ATKINS.

WE suppose it is always necessary for officials to evade unpleasant truths; their conscience is rudimentary, and they do it without an effort. Still, we cannot help thinking that there was everything to be gained, from a party and a popular point of view, by Mr. Stanhope accepting the plea, urged by his own following, for the redress of the wrongs of the private soldier. Democrats may fairly object on principle to a reform in army administration which would tend to popularise the land-service, with its feeble but dangerous imitation of Continental models, its huge expenditure (exceeding that of any military nation), its inefficiency, and its aristocratic "taint." But what do the Tories in that galley? One is compelled to conclude that Mr. Stanhope will not ameliorate Tommy Atkins's lot because he sees that such a task involves a rigid overhauling of our War Budget and that complete reconstruction of our whole scheme of military defence which every army expert demands. From work of this character your mediocre office man will shrink to the crack of doom. That is all the more reason for undertaking it.

For the very plain fact is, that though the Queen can nominally command throughout her Empire the services of nearly a million men in arms, and though we spend 57 millions a-year on defence, she has not got an army, as modern war-makers understand that word. Excluding India, she has "one corps and a bit," which it takes almost as many weeks to mobilise as France or Germany requires days to put six times the force in the field. And when she had got her poor little skeleton battalions together, she would find them mostly made up of sickly boys, the "Submerged Tenth" of our towns, half-trained and not half-seasoned. This may seem strong language; we doubt whether any competent military man would deny it. But what do we expect? We get what we pay for. On Mr. Stanhope's own computation the wages of a private soldier amount to about £12 or £13 a year, and all, or nearly all, "found." The result is, that after successive reductions in the age and the physique of recruits, we are now getting yearly thousands of boys barely 18, under 5 ft. 4 in. in height, and measuring 33 in. round the chest; and that even under these conditions we were last month 4,893 men short of the establishment. These additions to our army, as the latest report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting shows, are being more and more drawn, not from the country, but from the town and manufacturing districts. Even London is to-day a great recruiting centre. When these boys have been hardened into something like condition, and have become fighting men of 30 to 35, 80 per cent. of them leave the ranks for ever, weary of spending their prime in profitless servitude. Even their numbers are decreasing. In 1885 we got 39,500 recruits; last

year we only got 31,400; in 1889 we were 10,000 short of the first figure. A large part of this decrease is unquestionably due to the very gratifying fact that the classes from which Tommy Atkins is drawn have, with the revival of trade, preferred civil employment. Wages have risen everywhere but in the Army, and there they are fixed at a rate which will attract only the immature refuse of town life in its most dismal and least reputable aspects. These boys come from the "Submerged Tenth;" according to General Booth, they largely go back to it, passing in the meanwhile through the dangerous medium of the barrack-room, and too often carrying with them a fresh deposit of foul and brutal habit.

No one will contend that this is a satisfactory state of things; but the most humiliating feature of it is that, with its acknowledged inefficiency, the Army is only kept up to its present standard by a dishonest system of touting advertisement by the State. Thus we offer our recruits a free kit and a free ration daily of bread and meat—the meat, by the way, being insufficient in quantity and bad in quality. They naturally infer that this is equivalent to an offer of free board and clothes, but it is nothing of the kind. The "free rations" only cover half the soldier's food; in the winter he has to expend his nominal wage on clothing; his old clothing is hawked away, and he has a heap of "sundries," which, taken together, leave him, not the nominal shilling a day, but about 4s. 6d. a week. Bad as this is from the military point of view, it is equally objectionable from the position to which Parliament has lately given its adhesion, that the State should be a model employer. It is absolutely beside the purpose to compare the wages of the Continental conscript with those of the English volunteer soldier. Continental States force their citizens to serve, and pay them largely in kind. We affect to make a free bargain with ours, and while we promise them a money payment, propose terms which only lads of a very low type will accept, and then cheat them of their nominal wage. But though an expenditure of £750,000 would probably content a better class than we now attract to the standards, Mr. Stanhope has apparently no idea of offering it.

The debates on the Army will deepen the conviction of our authorities that nothing but a total change of system will remedy the evils which paralyse the defensive forces of the Empire. That can never come about until we alter, or at least clarify, our conceptions of the purpose for which we want an army at all. At present, old Waterloo and Crimean memories survive, and we still feebly contemplate fighting Continental Europe on land with a force ridiculously inadequate; albeit it costs more, counting everything, than the multitudinous legions of the Fatherland. Unless this notion disappears, and is replaced by the equally patriotic and popular idea of a purely defensive force, our colossal mistake may not be revealed to us until one fatal day we put the scant siftings of Bethnal Green and Halifax face to face with the levies of some mighty nation in arms. With a humbler and more practical notion of our responsibilities, we could afford to pay Tommy Atkins well, and make something better of him after his service than a tradeless loafer, cut out for mischief. We might follow the counsels of Sir Frederick Roberts and Sir Charles Dilke, and separate the Indian and home forces, turning the latter into a long-service army at good pay, largely reducing the home levies, and placing the brunt of home defence upon the Volunteers, supported by field artillery. The Guards, being still a fairly popular service, with a finer physical standard than the bulk of the line infantry, might form school regiments for training the Volunteer and Militia non-commissioned

and regimental officers. This, at all events, would simplify our scheme of defence, and give it a national character. At present, it is a mere gaudy and inefficient plaything, based on a thoroughly discreditable system of "sweating."

THE EGYPTIAN JUGGLE.

THE brief discussion of Egyptian affairs in the House of Commons on Monday must have disagreeably reminded the public of the fatal facility of Ministerial explanations. There never was a Foreign Under-Secretary who was taken aback by anything. Two years ago Sir James Fergusson had not the ghost of an idea that Egyptian troops would ever march on Tokar. He repudiated the suggestion that there was any necessity to advance beyond Suakim, and he deplored the expediency of holding that post. On Monday he spoke of Tokar as if it were the final goal of reasonable ambition. Once at Tokar, the Egyptians must be righteously happy; they must checkmate the slave-dealers and give "inland trade" an irresistible stimulus. All this was reeled off by Sir James Fergusson with the ease and fluency of the official who is ready for any change of front. Ministers have allowed themselves to be persuaded by the military authorities at Cairo that Tokar is "the key of the Eastern Soudan," and that this key ought to be in British hands. A key is not usually regarded as a superfluous appendage. It is frequently used for opening a door; and only a simpleton can believe that the possession of Tokar will satisfy the military advisers of the Khedive. It is well known that the Egyptian Government have never abandoned the idea of reconquering the Soudan. Sir James Fergusson is not their mouthpiece. He merely represents the temporary convenience of the Government at home. Two years ago it was his cue to care nothing about the Soudan; to-day it is his cue to describe Tokar as an indispensable base of operations. He has acquired some wonderful information about the wool of the district, wool-gathering being a congenial task to a Tory Under-Secretary. We must hold Tokar in order to keep Osman Digma out of so fertile a district, and, having opened the Eastern Soudan and its "inland trade" with this valuable key, we may some day find the bland and smiling Under-Secretary expatiating on the irresistible fascinations of Berber.

All this hinges most seriously on the question of the British occupation of Egypt. We are pledged to withdraw, but we are also pledged to establish a stable and independent Government, with no responsibilities which it cannot face. The British administration of Egypt has done much for the country. We have offended France, but we have improved the condition of the Egyptians. Conciliation of the French is desirable but problematical, whereas the benefits conferred on Egypt are definite and substantial. It cannot fairly be said, however, that the task of setting Egypt on its feet is accomplished, or that we can withdraw now with the conviction that there will be no valid excuse for the intervention of another European Power. But if evacuation must come, how are the Government preparing for it? Are they keeping the responsibilities of the Khedive within sternly prescribed limits? Are they adapting the duties of this feeble State to the strength they are carefully nursing? This is the light in which the expedition to Tokar must be considered. That enterprise has been successful enough; Egyptian troops, under British officers, have been taught to stand against the dreaded Dervishes. There

has been no repetition of the catastrophe which paralysed Valentine Baker. But this very success will tempt the Khedive to renewed efforts to recover the whole of his lost dominion; and the more this fatal ambition is encouraged by our military representatives, and the greater the pressure that is put upon Lord Salisbury, the more visionary and remote will become the withdrawal of our forces from the Delta. Of course this consideration does not enter into the cheerful philosophy of Sir James Fergusson. His motto is, "Who maun to Tokar maun to Tokar." He talks airily about opening up "the inland trade," as if he were advocating nothing more serious than some railway project of Sir Edward Watkin's. He assumes that the tribes around Tokar are yearning for the blessings of Egyptian rule, and that wherever the Khedive is paramount the slave trade must languish. We know how Gordon failed to civilise Ismailia, and there is absolutely no proof that if left to themselves, the Egyptian officials under Tewfik would be a whit more beneficent in the Soudan than the native agents of his predecessor. Who is so simple as to suppose that the Egyptian Pashas, relieved from British supervision, would make any effort to put down the traffic in slaves? If "the inland trade" of the Soudan is to be developed, it must commit the responsible authorities to undertakings far beyond the Tokar district. If this is done by the British Government we shall never be safe from expeditions of reconquest; if it is left to the Egyptians there will be an incessant risk of intervention either by England or by some other Power.

It is no matter for surprise, then, that the Tokar expedition is regarded abroad as a symptom of British insincerity. The French cannot reconcile manoeuvres of this kind with the professions of our diplomatists. They say, "You reiterate your pledge to withdraw from Egypt, while you are all the while encouraging the Khedive in a policy which makes withdrawal practically impossible. Instead of limiting your responsibilities, you are indefinitely extending them." There must be some better answer to this than Sir James Fergusson's eulogy of the wool-producing virtue of Tokar. The gravest part of the business is that the recklessness of a Government which has probably only a twelve-month to live will seriously embarrass Lord Salisbury's successor. It is not the first experience we have had of this fatal inheritance. The whole of our difficulties in Egypt sprang from the policy of the Dual Control. Since then the Tories have played fast and loose with this department of foreign affairs. Before the bombardment of the forts of Alexandria and the suppression of Arabi, they raved about the inaction of a Liberal Ministry. They have since tried to curry popular favour by condemning the very acts for which they clamoured. They have alternately applauded and denounced a forward policy in the Soudan, and now they are pretending that the Tokar expedition is not a preliminary to reconquest. The plain meaning of this shuffling is that when Lord Salisbury is driven from office he will leave to Lord Rosebery a legacy of embarrassment which the Tory Opposition will promptly turn to partisan account. Sir James Fergusson will then discover that to stop short at Tokar is a nerveless and humiliating policy, and that there are more friendly tribes craving for the priceless blessings of Egyptian administration, and more districts bursting with unappreciated wool. Such is the pretty little game for saddling the British taxpayer with incalculable burdens, and making the evacuation of Egypt an empty phrase. How far it will succeed we cannot say, but the constituencies ought not to let themselves be juggled out of the actual issue.

THE MUNICIPALISATION OF MARKETS.

FEW more fascinating and instructive chapters of English municipal history have of late been opened to us than those which are written in the massy volumes that record the labours of the Markets Commission. The whole of this remarkable work, opening with Mr. Elton's and Mr. Costelloe's brilliant examination of fair and market charters, and concluding with the Commissioners' lucid summing up of the vast body of evidence submitted to them, is a monument to the skill and knowledge of one dead man. Mr. Bradlaugh made the Commission; he furnished it with much of its most valuable material; his clear views and vigorous expression of them are plainly written in its Report. There is a touch of irony in the fact that the champion of individualism should have set on foot an inquiry which has ended in an absolutely conclusive verdict for the full municipalisation of the market monopoly, and that he should himself have furnished proof strong as Holy Writ of the justice of this finding. So it is, however, and had Mr. Bradlaugh been a Commissioner rather than a witness, he must needs have signed the report which declares unanimously in favour of the abolition of the market rights now held by individuals, and of their transfer to local authorities. Whether he would have deliberately gone for free competition in markets against the weight of all the evidence before the Commission is not quite clear. We doubt it. Mr. Bradlaugh upheld the sound economic view of "free and open markets"—i.e., markets in which tolls that are half of the nature of *octrois* (such as still exist in old towns like Carlisle), and are wholly of the nature of food taxes—would be abolished, or rather replaced by a simple system of rent or stallage equivalent to the advantage conferred on the stall-holders, which would in most cases cover the actual working expenses of the market. But this is very far from opening the door to a wild proposal to take the control of markets out of the hands of Bedfords and Goldsmids and transfer it to an unknown body of speculative traders. One piece of quaint illogic—if we may coin a word for our purpose—Mr. Bradlaugh would certainly have avoided. He would not have proposed to endow local authorities with market rights in one breath and to divest them of the privilege in the next. Yet this is what the majority of the Commissioners propose to do. The point of a market monopoly has always been the ability of the monopolist to prevent the establishment of a rival market within a specified distance. The Commissioners rightly propose to do away with this, but the majority wrongly suggest compensation for the loss of the power at once to tax the people's food and to create a corner in the supply of it. Obviously, then, the public authority would simply be buying a right which had ceased to exist, and there would be nothing to purchase save mere land and buildings—of doubtful value, if they are to be subject to anarchic competition at the hands of a new set of market "promoters." The simple course—to which Mr. Childers, Sir James Corry, Mr. Little, and Sir Thomas Martineau, with some reserves, and Mr. Pierce Mahony and Mr. Picton with unequivocal clearness, give their assent—is the transfer of the market rights from private to public hands, in which case they cease to constitute a monopoly at all. It is equally clear that, as Messrs. Childers, Picton, and Mahony recommend, there should be no compensation for the withdrawal of such a thoroughly vicious privilege as that which in London hampers the food supply of five millions of people. The Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Norfolk, and the rest, may fairly obtain the price of the stalls and coverings they may have laid down in

Sheffield or Covent Garden markets. But their market "rights" were simply part of the old *jura regalia*, derived from the Frankish kings, and inwoven with the growth of local commerce in this country—i.e., they had no fixed and inalienable stamp of law. They came from Royal charters, and not, as a rule, from Parliamentary statute. The very essence of the monopoly—the power to prohibit rivals within a certain district—is as obsolete as the tolls in kind (at Berwick a toll of one egg in thirty is still taken), the Irish "luck-penny," the Carlisle *octrois*, the chalkings of the market-women at Gort and Tuam, the differential tolls, and all the manifold survivals of mediæval usage which this most charming of Blue-books embalms. It had much to do with the necessities of mediæval wayfaring and commercial life. Thus Braxton says that the limit of six miles and two-thirds, within which no market competition was allowed, was fixed as a kind of dividend of the working-day—allowing for the journey to market, the journey back, and the time necessary for the sale of the articles. The market grant grew out of the desire to gather trade within the safe walls of the old fortified "burh," and it was exchanged for the real protection which the grantee exercised by force of his strong right hand. Private ownership of markets has long survived the disappearance of all such duties, while it has contrived to alter a conditional grant into an absolute right. The old Court of Pye Poudre has given place to municipal surveillance of the people's food supply. To-day the magnates of Covent Garden and Spitalfields, avail themselves of streets which the public authorities repair, of sanitary officials for which the public pays, and of the public superintendence of weights and measures, and the whole machinery of buying and selling.

It is needless to say that every abuse which the perversion of law has given the private monopolist all over England is intensified tenfold in London, that hunting-ground of the monopolist run wild. The Act of 1858, which gave local authorities power to purchase markets, as well as the Public Health Act of 1875, which enforced the privilege, does not apply to the metropolis, and all that the County Council can do is to spend a beggarly £1,000 in prosecuting "inquiries." Yet London, according to the evidence of Mr. Casson and others, is grossly under-marketed. It has thirteen markets proper, eight under the control of the City Corporation, which is responsible for one square mile of London's vast area, and the rest under private ownership and management. The West has no markets proper; the South is shamefully off for food centres; the South-east has only Deptford Cattle Market; the East is poorly supplied; the North has Smithfield and a tiny hay market; and the one squalid central fruit and vegetable dépôt which blocks the Strand is improperly overcrowded, and is ludicrously beneath the level of the wants of our citizen-nation, occupying the port of the world, and the very centre of cosmopolitan trade and luxury. London wants a complete ring of local marts, as well as vast centralised *Halles*. Yet, with its enormous and ever-growing needs, the gaping mouth of London must not be stretched an inch wider, if our market monopolists have their way. Sir Julian Goldsmid and the other owners of Spitalfields Market were able to stop Bishopsgate Market altogether, and to force from the Great Eastern Railway—the line that connects London with the wheat-growing districts of the Eastern Counties—an annual toll on account of Stratford, simply because these undertakings were within measurable distance of their own chartered establishment, dating from the reign of Charles the Second, when

London was a village compared with its present dimensions. In the case of Stratford the market was three and a half miles from London itself; but the claims of monopoly were paramount, and Sir Julian's food toll of £5,000 a year was made safe. Obviously, it is high time for London to possess the power which is already claimed by local authorities over nearly half the markets in England and Wales. A great London market system—free of all tolls and dues which are local taxes on food, rather than rent for open-air shops—regulated after the fashion of the magnificent Halles of Paris, which the Revolution wrested from the hands of the *seigneurs*, connected with the railway depôts which pour in its food supplies, and duly localised to meet the wants of the swarming myriads of the East and South, would enormously economise the feeding power of the Metropolis. It is true that Londoners are not marketers by habit, as Parisians are, and it may be difficult suddenly to change their fashion of conducting the house purchases. One result, however, of the lack of market provision—viz., the wasting of the greater portion of the fish supply, which, if properly managed, might feed the whole East End—could be remedied by enlarging Covent Garden, and connecting it, as a great central food depôt, with a central terminus for all London and the United Kingdom. There is ample room for such a scheme in the ground now given up to mazes of rookeries, to Lincoln's Inn Fields, and to trumpery survivals of Old London, between Holborn and the Strand. Into such a centre might run all the great trunk lines, and in the end the metropolitan services, and it would be the appropriate spot for fixing the commissariat of the province of toilers that we call London.

ON GREEN BENCHES.

THE debate on Welsh Disestablishment revealed Mr. Pritchard Morgan in a new character. Mr. Morgan is a typical colonial type. He has a hardy roving air, and his strong face is seamed with the lines that the rough experiences of the *strug-for-lifeur* have laid on. For a time it was not easy to associate him with so grave a theme as the championship of the Nonconformist cause in Wales; and the occasional suggestion of a sporting phrase, and of a dialect of freer and rougher coinage than the House of Commons is wont to recognise on these high occasions, bore out this impression. In particular, Mr. Gladstone in evening dress, decked with a giant camellia which easily outshone the glories of Mr. Chamberlain's neighbouring orchid, and dividing his attention between Mr. Morgan's speech and an apparently excellent jest which he was good enough to share with Mr. John Morley, hardly seemed to approve the nature of Mr. Morgan's references to the work of the Establishment in Wales. Mr. Gladstone is notoriously sensitive to references to the Church, and when he had completed his asides to Mr. Morley—enforced by some pretty play with a quill pen on his colleague's coat-sleeve—his listening face grew very grave. "There have never been any saints in the English Church," said Mr. Morgan in a rather large generalisation; and Mr. Gladstone looked graver still. Presently, after Mr. Dillwyn, a much-respected figure in the House, but now a rare contributor to its active work, had very briefly seconded Mr. Morgan, Mr. Gladstone opened his own view of the case with a vigorously pointed eulogy of the Welsh Church, inwoven with a very pretty piece of ecclesiastical history. On the question of his vote, however, the speaker, though he had nothing to tell the House as to his decision, interested it keenly in the manner in which he announced it. Everyone knows the ex-Premier's curious aversion to going

back on an old opinion. Mr. Gladstone cherishes, with fine idolatry, the delicate fabric of a perfectly consistent body of doctrine of which he firmly believes himself to be the depository. But in this case, with the pleasant humour which nowadays wins almost equally on both sides of the House, he made no secret at all of his change of view. "If I said twenty-one years ago that the cases of the Welsh and the English Churches could not be separated," said Mr. Gladstone in effect, "I have since had time to be born again and to come of age." From this point the argument was uncompromisingly for Disestablishment, on the familiar grounds which the statesman had already made his own in regard to the Irish Church. The debate, and still more conspicuously the division, went admirably. The Unionists, for once, were compelled to divide their forces, with the usual comfortable balance on the side of the Government. Lord Hartington declined to apply his declaration on Scottish Disestablishment to the even more pertinent case of Wales, but Mr. Chamberlain could hardly disavow the most direct and unequivocal of his old pledges. The very small majority of only thirty-two was a significant comment on Mr. Raikes's declaration that the Establishment in Wales and in England would fall together.

After Mr. Hanbury's crushing exposure of Mr. Stanhope's administration of the War Office, the chief Parliamentary event of the last few days has been the announcement of the appointment of a Royal Commission on the labour question. Even that has only indirectly come within the view of the House. The real hero of the occasion has been Sir John Gorst, a politician of singular acuteness, an accessible and deft lobbyist, without, however, the force of character which makes a very great career. Sir John Gorst has always been an attached politician. He gave Lord Randolph facts and a political basis, and his loyal "devilling" for one of the ablest and most thankless of masters was rewarded with monumental ingratitude. Having lost Lord Randolph, Sir John made friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and was taken into Ministerial houses. Here, after a period of comparative uselessness, he again found his *métier* at the Berlin Conference, and in two years of steady work on the problems that are still new to most politicians, untouched with the sacred fire of the enthusiast, and unfamiliar with the economic aspects of their own business. It has therefore happened to him that in a critical moment in politics he has intervened decisively for the good of his party. His influence was clear in the discussion on Mr. Buxton's motion, and it has been the main factor in the appointment of the Commission.

Mr. Bartley's speech in favour of the old Liberal reform of a differentiated income tax was extremely well argued from the popular point of view, as well as from the aspects which appeal more directly to a House of Commons audience. Mr. Smith's reply was made in the character of under-study to Mr. Goschen, and was eked out with a display of figures, which, conscientiously read from very large slips of paper, puzzled no one more than the speaker. The debate, however, was a good one, and furnished an excellent opportunity for a solid Liberal vote for the motion. The figures, however, were spoiled by what many Radicals considered the ill-advised decision of the Front Opposition Bench to adhere to old traditions, and to stop any proposal which opens up a revised Budget. Accordingly Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Henry Fowler, the finance experts present, filed into the Government lobby, and left Mr. Bartley to the support of the independent Liberals. Later in the evening the new Tory platform had a plank or two added in the shape of State arbitration in labour disputes, and a fair—though only a fair—Bill from Mr. Theobald, a home-county member, in favour of workmen's trains at a halfpenny a mile. But there was one notable set-back. There is

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perhaps only one man in the front rank of Conservative politicians who has individual force enough to change the natural bent of officialism towards half-hearted courses. It is Lord Randolph. But the member for Paddington has destroyed himself, and to-day he is an outlaw where he might have been a dictator. Failing him, the Government made a singularly poor selection for the new Committee on the hours of railway servants. Five railway directors and two shareholders to one working-class member! Against this the Radicals, who are after all the driving force of reform, protested with a considerable measure of success, Dr. Clark leading the attack, while Mr. Morton, his scarf-pin gleaming with the light of battle, sounded, *à la Wamba*, an onslaught from the back benches.

For the rest, the only parliamentary event has been Mr. Morley's vigorous re-assertion of his old position—which he enforced in his maiden speech to the House—in regard to the forward policy in Egypt. Mr. Morley was able to put into his short speech the note of triumphant retrospect in which John Bright excelled. Alone among front bench Liberals, Mr. Morley has a conscience void of offence in this matter. But he had to struggle with an audience looking spectral through the fog, and held chiefly by the military contingent.

Mr. Labouchere's threatened discussion on the Spinning House scandal was averted by Mr. Matthews' promise to release the girl as an act of grace rather than of justice. More satisfactory was the debate on the Home Secretary's Factory Bill. Mr. Buxton gave a formidable list of its omissions—the neglect to raise the age of half-timers, to deal with overtime, to include domestic workshops. Lord Compton and other Liberal speakers pressed all these points home, and reduced the measure to its true dimensions as clever, shifty, but quite inadequate, far below the recommendations of the two main "documents" available—the reports of the Sweating Committee and of the Berlin Conference. The best feature of the debate was Sir William Houldsworth's guarded admission that it might be necessary to raise the age of employment for hire among children. As things stand to-day, Mr. Matthews' measure clearly represents the low water mark of the Parliamentary conscience in relation to the amendment of the Factory Acts.

CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THE continued rumours as to the impending prosecution of Prince Bismarck—probably, it has been suggested, before a court-martial—received official contradiction towards the end of last week, but were revived by the German Emperor's speech at the dinner to the Provincial Estates of Brandenburg on the Friday evening. His allusion to the "spirit of disobedience abroad in the land, using an ocean of paper and ink to lead astray the minds of the people and of those who were devoted to him," which the organs of the Cartell and of Prince Bismarck applied to the Social Democrats, can assuredly only refer to their own attacks on the Imperial policy. The Ministry are not likely to be led away by Socialism, unless from the point of view of the old Cartell parties, who would no doubt, at least in their hearts, include the Emperor himself. The speech is not explicit—Royal speeches seldom are—but it strikes the reader as youthful and (so to speak) unworlly. The Emperor is profoundly miserable that party spirit should exist at all; he is shocked and pained that his plans should meet with any opposition; but he is determined to override it entirely. It would be difficult to make any speech less suited to a festive occasion.

That the Cartell parties are disgusted is hardly wonderful. The Ministry has allowed the Socialist Law and the Septennate to drop; instead of pro-

tecting agriculture, it proposes to admit Austrian wheat: instead of a vigorous Colonial policy, it has concluded the Anglo-German agreement: it is undoing the work of the *Culturkampf*, and is suspected of meditating the readmission of the Jesuits; while the new factory law, still under discussion, will no doubt irritate the large employers of labour.

Prince Bismarck has declined the candidature for the Reichstag offered him by the National Liberals for a division of Hanover, and does not intend to appear for the present even in the Prussian Upper House. He has disclaimed any intention of visiting Paris, and censured—not obscurely—the Empress Frederick for straining the politeness of the French people. Her visit, as our Paris correspondent indicates, has proved a complete failure, and the Cartell parties are probably not sorry. Nor is the German Embassy in Paris—Bismarckian to a man—which, it seems, has opposed her plans from the first.

The Prussian and Imperial $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loans of 450 million marks, or £22,500,000, were offered for direct subscription last week at the designedly low figure of $84\frac{1}{2}$, with a view to attract the small investor, who was allowed to subscribe as little as 200 marks, and for whom (as in France) special provision was made. The response was almost embarrassingly favourable. The recent French loan was covered $16\frac{1}{2}$ times, an event hitherto almost without precedent; but this loan was taken up more than 40 times over. Several banks applied singly for the whole amount, and large subscriptions were tendered from foreign countries, especially from England. Care will be taken, however, to reserve some portion for the small investor at the allotment, an example which might very well be followed in the case of municipal and county loans in England.

The Belgian workmen propose to organise a general strike as a protest against the rejection (which is now certain) of the scheme for revising the Constitution, and are taking steps to obtain assistance abroad—among the miners in France and Germany, for instance. The Government is reported to be preparing to repress this project by special legislation.

The situation in Holland is peculiar. The Conservative Government is virtually in a minority, but is allowed to continue in office, as the general election takes place in June. The new military law—abolishing substitutes, and thereby introducing universal compulsory service—has exasperated the Roman Catholics, and among them the large manufacturers of the South. In the Senate, according to the report given by the *Indépendance Belge*, M. De Bruya has declared that the Government has forfeited the confidence of the Catholics; while M. Fransen van der Putte, a former Liberal minister, has indicated that the Liberals will be unable to return to power; and M. Van Royen, an advanced Liberal, has prophesied a reorganisation of the old Conservative party—now almost extinct—which shall include the Clericals and the so-called "anti-revolutionaries" of the North. If this takes place, and if the military law can be modified to meet the wishes of the Catholics, the June elections will not greatly modify the situation.

A new Anglo-Portuguese agreement awaits ratification by the Cortes, which will shortly be summoned to consider an arrangement for granting a tobacco monopoly in return for a loan of nine millions sterling, guaranteed by a syndicate of French bankers. The Republican clubs have been dissolved by decree, and a Republican paper suppressed. The trials of the Oporto revolutionists are proceeding.

The Norwegian Nationalists have gained an important victory. The defeat of the Ministry, on Monday, raises the whole question of the relation between Norway and Sweden, and the immediate situation is extremely problematical.

It is difficult to form any clear notion of the

electoral situation in Austria amid the mixture of Nationalist and Centralist, anti-Semite and Socialist, labour-reform and Catholic manifestoes and speeches, especially as the Austrian "representation of interests" and the system of double election to the Reichsrath is one of the most irritating puzzles yet invented by doctrinaires. But it is plain that the German Liberals are much divided and inadequately organised, and it is probable that though their labour policy may gain them some accession of strength from a section of the Poles, and perhaps from other quarters, they will lose something to the German Nationalists and Social Democrats. In Vienna (or rather Hernal) an exciting contest is expected between Prince Alois Liechtenstein and Dr. Kronawetter. The former is the champion of the small trader and an anti-Semite. In Vienna, indeed, anti-Semitism is rampant, but there is much division among its supporters, and its exact aims are not clear. The complaint seems to be that the Jews hold (or may hold) all the capital of the country; that they may thus control the means of production, and exact what interest they please. But, beyond vague abuse of the Rothschild family, no remedy is even hinted at—unless it be the tax on Bourse transactions, which is also an item in the programme of the German Liberals.

The pastoral letter of the Bishops condemns anti-Semitism, favours social reform, and is couched in moderate language. Herr von Plener, in a speech at Prague, has indicated that his object will be to effect a new grouping of parties, so as to obtain a working majority. But probably Count Taaffe will be before him.

In Italy it has been suggested that the treaty by which the nation entered into the Triple Alliance should be published with a view to allay apprehension: but the publication is said to be opposed by the King, and could hardly take place without the consent of Germany and Austria. The Premier, in an interview published on Wednesday, has repeated his promises of economy and retrenchment (the reductions in the Budget are unofficially estimated at 50,000,000 fr.), and expressed his sense of the importance of the friendship of England and his desire to enter into more cordial relations with France.

For a considerable time the Servian Ministry under M. Gruitch has been attacked by a section of its own supporters. Three weeks ago the Minister of the Interior, M. Gajja, was sacrificed. Last Friday week, however, after repeated conflicts on items of the Budget, the Ministry gave up the struggle, and has been replaced by a more Radical Cabinet under M. Pachitch. The real cause of the crisis seems to be that considerable apprehension is felt at Belgrade—though it is ridiculed by the Austrian press—as to the possible results of the visit to Russia of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne; and that while Russia and Austria are "delimiting their respective spheres of influence" in Eastern Europe, it is thought desirable that the Servian Cabinet should be very distinctly Russophil. A "Revisionist" manifesto (to adopt the French term), just issued, it is said, in the interest of Prince Karageorgevitch, a claimant of the Servian Crown, seems to have very slight importance.

The Sioux chiefs seem profoundly dissatisfied with their reception at Washington, with the absence of General Miles from the conference to which they were summoned, with the supplies furnished, and with the non-fulfilment of the promises made by the United States Government. Further troubles are feared in the Spring.

The new Brazilian Constitution has been promulgated, and General Deodoro da Fonseca has been elected by Congress to the Presidency. The news from Buenos Ayres is reassuring. The attempt to assassinate General Roca seems to have been a trumpety affair. The municipal elections have resulted in the gain of four seats by the Union Civica; there are, however, rumours of further disturbances in some of the provinces.

The news from Chili is confusing. The Chilian insurrection is officially reported to be now confined to the nitrate districts. Iquique has been captured, lost, and re-captured by the so-called "Parliamentary forces"—technically, "the revolutionists"—apparently with heavy loss to non-combatants. Three British war-ships aided in protecting the foreign residents. A decisive battle is expected shortly. The President's family has retired to Argentina. The Navy has been active before Iquique, and the three gunboats at Buenos Ayres can hardly be called an important reinforcement for the Government.

THE SWORD AND SOCIETY.

THE lecture by Mr. Egerton Castle, with its illustrative bouts by a number of brilliant and well-known swordsmen, to which Mr. Irving invited his friends on Wednesday afternoon, was so interesting and entertaining in itself that probably few of the guests were moved by it to reflection on the ethical and social principles underlying the play of muscle and the clash of steel. What is it, however, that distinguishes the art and practice of fencing from all the other athletic exercises of our time? For certainly even a blunted blade is handled in a glamour which surrounds no other hygienic pastime. Considered merely as exercise, fencing is probably inferior to boxing, and certainly inferior to general intelligent work in a gymnasium; while as a combination of physical and moral training, it cannot be mentioned in the same breath with horsemanship. Yet the mere words "cold steel" send a thrill through the hearer which no consecrated phrase of the racecourse or the hunting-field has ever approached, and the glitter and ring of crossing swords, though they are muzzled with a button and culminate in a "*Touché*," makes the dullest of us catch his breath. The explanation is sadly hackneyed: heredity; but in this instance our inherited emotions have not quite degenerated into instinct. We can never see or think of sword-play without a distinct conscious appreciation of the circumstances either past or alien to us when the hilt protected the honour as well as the hand, and when a man's life hung in the balance of his blade. And to realise how slightly we Englishmen of today are separated from these circumstances, it is enough to recollect that in almost every neighbouring nation each year tells its tale of men killed, sword in hand, in times of piping peace, and that even one of ourselves cannot be presented to his Sovereign without buckling a tailor's blade upon his hip.

Mr. Egerton Castle called his lecture "The Story of Swordsmanship, especially considered in its connection with the rise and decline of duelling;" but this connection is either so obvious as to need no consideration, or else it is a process of social development much too obscure for elucidation on such an occasion. What he really gave was a pictorial sketch of the development of the modern duelling-sword, and a most successful sketch it was. First came the unwieldy two-handed sword, with the long and picturesque preparation of the blow, the smashing delivery and the slow recover. Then the sword grew shorter and handier, and the armour dwindled down to a small buckler; and a rattling bout between Captain Hutton and Dr. Mouatt Biggs showed how modern an old English combat may have been. Next the long Italian rapier made its appearance, and nimbleness and cunning began to prove too much for mere vigour. The buckler gave way to the lighter dagger as a defensive weapon for the left hand, and new tricks sprang up from its employment offensively, necessitating a still lighter and handier blade. Fencing now became very elaborate in practice, and preposterously artificial in theory: success was only to be found by treading the "mysterious

circle." There appeared the "villain who fights by the book of arithmetic;" just as some men spent their lives looking for the philosopher's stone, others devoted them to a search for the "secret thrust," and the "ineluctable pass." It was the heyday of "Don Lewis of Madrid, the sole remaining master of the world." The honest old English backsword had disappeared, and its last adherent had exclaimed, "I shall never see true manhood again!" But civil war came and Englishman fought Englishman with his own weapon, and the backsword displaced the rapier and dagger again. Swordsmanship, however, is the art of killing your adversary quickly and safely, and it is much easier to do this with the point than with the edge, so the fittest survived and the hated "foreign frog-pickling play" crept back in the shape of the French small-sword. And this has not greatly changed to become the *épée de combat* of to-day, the finest and most deadly piece of "cold steel" that has ever been invented or ever will be. Each step in this progression was illustrated with a bout or an exhibition really beyond praise, by the small band of swordsmen who maintain the "art of arts" among us—Mr. Egerton Castle himself, equally learned in body and mind, brilliant in style, and marvellously quick; Mr. Walter Pollock, in every respect the perfect type of the modern fencer; and Captain Hutton, an ideal swordsman from eye to heel. Whether illustrating Marozzo's fantastic Progression or Thibault's preposterous practice on the Mysterious Circle, or in the middle of a hot bout with sword and buckler, it would be impossible to imagine a more appropriate appearance or a more faultless style. It was a pity, by the way, that time did not allow an exhibition of *schlütger*-play, for although the *schlütger* is a perfectly artificial weapon, more duels, as Mr. Castle remarked, are fought with it than with all others put together, and *auf die mensurgehen* represents the most punctilious survival of the duelling code of honour. Perhaps, too, Mr. Irving will find somebody to tell us the story of Eastern weapons as Mr. Castle has done that of European ones—of the knife of the Goorkha, the swords of the *Samurai*, the *kris* of the Malay, and the fighting-irons of the Chinaman.

Most English people have made up their minds that the duel is pure barbarism, conceived in folly and executed in bloodthirstiness, admitting of no defence. Probably they are right, but *de omnibus dubitandum est*, and one wonders if their conviction is never assailed by the least doubt. Is it quite certain that if a man's honour were grossly affronted to-day, and in a manner for which the law either could not or would not give him technical redress, and if he were to provoke the offender to a duel and run him through the body, there would not be a strong current of popular feeling in his favour? Or perhaps we should rather say, that a considerable weft of sympathy and excuse would not run across the warp of censure? The duel has, of course, the tendency in one direction to create the swash-buckler—the man who is always ready to "get into difficulties by word of mouth, and out of them by deed of point." But has it no tendency to maintain a standard of at least formal courtesy, and is it not a fact that the liability to be suddenly called upon to take one's life in one's hand has an elevating and sobering effect upon the character? As for manners, consider the two phases of modern society where a personal affront leads inevitably to a hostile encounter—those of the fighting German student and the cowboy—the real cowboy, of course, not the drunken rowdy of the frontier bar. After making the proper local allowances, is it quite clear that the standard of manners there is lower than that of the Strand or the Underground Railway? Civilisation is an ideal goal, but is there no danger, as Mr. Egerton Castle—who, by the way, had not a word of defence for the serious practice of his art—remarked, of being "civilised out of all manhood"?

And it is curious, in conclusion, to reflect that the growth of the independence of woman is coincident with the decline of duelling, whatever may be cause or effect. From the days of Tubal Cain to that when Peg Woffington pinned her roses on Angelo's breast, nine duels out of ten have been fought because of a woman. But it is impossible to fight for a woman who is capable and desirous of taking care of herself. No doubt, it is best that she should, and therefore one's feeling on the subject is probably only a natural and praiseworthy wonder as to just what are the new virtues coming to replace the courage and the charm that constituted the ideal relation of men and women in the days when the sword and society were in vital connection.

"THE ART OF THE NOVELIST."

MISS AMELIA B. EDWARDS, LL.D., is a novelist after her kind, and has lately uttered her mystery—or some of it—and her theory of the novel. It happened at the Birkbeck Institution. "Such accidents," Mr. Henry James somewhere remarks, "are happiest when soonest over: and there is many a creator of living figures whose friends, however full of faith in his inspiration, will do well to pray for him when he sallies forth into the dim wilderness of theory." "The trouble will begin at 7.30" was Mark Twain's way of announcing his early lectures; and novelists who make bold to discuss their art in public might adopt the phrase. We do not know how soon the accident was over in this case. But Miss Edwards's friends had little reason to be anxious; for she chose a trim little lady-like corner of the wilderness and followed all the sign-posts. And so, when Miss Amelia Edwards left her audience to go bedwards, all was well and no nasty epoch inaugurated.

Nevertheless, her views upon the novel were reported in the *Times* to the extent of half a column. This honour—usually reserved for statesmen and other amateurs who open Working Men's Libraries—has at last been bestowed on a human being who might be supposed to know something of the subject under treatment. So that one could not choose but read. And these are the views of Miss Amelia B. Edwards:—"The world of fiction is a world governed by the law of poetical justice, and therein lies the secret of its external fascination. It satisfies our inborn sense of right, it transports us into a purer atmosphere; it vindicates the ways of God to man." *Ergo* (1) No novelist behaves fitly in reproducing, after his power, the world which he observes, if he sees the good man suffering wrong therein, and the wicked prospering, without apparent cause: he ought rather to assume the functions of a judge and ladle out rewards and punishments, as if vols. i. and ii. were *This World*, and vol. iii. the *Next*. And (2) No Agnostic can write a good novel unless he "escapes his own notice," as Thucydides would say. Miss Edwards, without pausing to draw these inferences, went on to show that her heart was in the right place, though her head was in the Birkbeck Institution. There never was a time (she declared), or a country, or a condition of society, in which the art of the story-teller did so go hand-in-hand with honour and valour and greatness of soul, or in which the reverse would have been tolerated. She could not, being a Miss—she could not "speak from personal knowledge of the depraved school of so-called realistic fiction." She would call the school depraved, but she could not—the members of the Birkbeck Institution would not expect it of her—expose herself to the contamination of knowing what she was talking about. But even that school, while delighting to depict vice, did not, she imagined—"imagined," mark you—depict it as a thing to be honoured and imitated. The curious thing is that, with the exception of Catulle Mendès, she is probably right. So far will artistic enthusiasm help out a decorous ignorance of the facts.

But when Miss Edwards proceeds to say that fiction "is an endeavour to conform the realities of life to the desires of the mind," we feel inclined to demur. We prefer to hold that it should endeavour to exhibit the realities of life, and leave to ethics the task of regulating the desires of the mind. Miss Edwards will doubtless remember a certain novel in which the following sentence occurred, or something very much like it (we quote from memory):—"The crack of a rifle was heard, and a partridge dropped amid the stubble." This sentence has always seemed to us to imply a somewhat Procrustean determination to conform the realities of life with the desires of the (female) mind: for none but the most uncompromising enemies of realism would choose to shoot partridges with a rifle. Again, we read, a few weeks back, of a certain heroine, that "she was the very prototype of her uncle." Here, too, we seemed to discover a certain impatience of fact that hardly fits in with our conception of the highest art. We would like to whisper into Miss Edwards's ear that Nature is good enough for us, and that if she will only show us the "realities of life" we will chance their not conforming to the "desires of the mind." Indeed (unless we fancy that we could construct something better than the existing universe) this seems the only decent attitude for "such a being as man in such a world as the present."

The worst of it is that, while the processes of reasoning among males have been reduced to rules and may be studied in text-books, those in use among women (though doubtless quite as cogent) possess, as yet, nothing that corresponds to the syllogism. Consequently, when we read that Miss Edwards (after her statement about conforming reality to the desires of the mind) dislikes the "historical novel" because it cannot hope "truthfully to depict the men and manners of the far past," we can only agree with her and wonder how on earth she arrived at it. "The real historical novel," to her thinking, "is the novel which paints the living world about us." This brings her to Dickens, Trollope, and Thackeray. And of them she remarks that Dickens was essentially a caricaturist, Trollope an admirable portrait-painter, and Thackeray a clairvoyant. For all the use of these distinctions, she might have added that George Meredith is an expert cyclist, and Thomas Hardy an adept at the use of globes. For what does it come to? "Dickens," we hear, "depicted his fellow men as they are not"—truly a marvellous feat! "Trollope presented his fellow men as they appeared in the world." "Thackeray read them through and through," and was a clairvoyant. There are some people who believe he was all the more a portrait-painter for this gift: and some (including Mr. W. D. Howells) have called him what Miss Edwards calls Dickens. So various are the opinions of mankind upon the most ordinary topics. But Miss Edwards's enthusiasm, at any rate, is tremendous. "To speak without reserve, and without hesitation," she thinks that "Thackeray is the greatest master of fiction the world has ever seen." As she confessedly speaks without "personal knowledge of the depraved school of so-called realistic fiction," it would be useless to ask her, And what about Balzac? Still, we might suggest that an acquaintance with that author would be useful even to LL.D.'s who stand up and speak about novel-writing "without reserve and without hesitation."

HOAR-FROST.

DURING this exceptionally cold winter all in this country have become familiar with the beautiful though trying phenomenon of hoar-frost. The children are delighted to look out from their cosy beds at the quaint arabesques of ice fern-leaves wrought on the glass panes of the window. Robust youths, walking over the meadows after breakfast, admire

the glistening films of ice on the pasture, the clear slender blades appearing like crystal spears. To those out of health the hoar-frost carries an indescribable shiver, forcing its killing rawness into their very vitals with cruel tenacity. And in the aged it excites the strange sepulchral cough which indicates the slowing vitality.

During many nights frost has been performing its secret ministry, unhelped by any wind, seizing in its ice-cold arms the dew that was being gently attracted by all the objects round. On the pastures the morning sun revealed "the lashes of light that trim the stars;" and the skeleton trees beautifully bedecked with millions of glistening diamonds. "The hoar trees of branching shade seem to have been distilling liquid pearl, and the white star's frosty gleams have brilliantly lighted up the virgin snow."

The Israelites, who in the wilderness thought the feeding manna was like the hoar-frost upon the ground, must have been acquainted with this beautiful phenomenon of nature; and ever since it has never ceased to attract attention. Till lately, however, its existence could not be accurately accounted for. A century ago Professor Patrick Wilson, of Glasgow, detailed his experiments and observations upon a "remarkable cold which accompanies the separation of hoar-frost from a clear air." The winter of 1783 was not unlike the present. Intensely cold, the atmosphere was extremely liable to change from a serene to a foggy state, and *vice versa*. When sheets of brown paper were laid out in the open air, they began to attract hoar-frost as soon as they had time to cool down to the temperature of the air. In the candle-light the surfaces were beautifully spangled over by innumerable reflections from minute crystals of hoar-frost. The temperature at the surface of the snow (then on the ground) was 8° Fahr. lower than that of the air above, although at a depth of three inches in the snow the temperature was 36° warmer than on the surface. He came to the conclusion that the excess of cold at the snow-surface had a constant relation to its power of drawing hoar-frost from the air.

Hoar-frost has been popularly described as frozen dew. But whence comes the dew? In his famous "Essay on Dew," published in 1814, Dr. Wells considered that for the most part it fell from the superincumbent air upon the ground beneath. But lately Mr. John Aitken has accurately demonstrated by undeniable experiments that it rises from the ground. He made a thin shallow metal tray, and placed it over the ground after sunset. On dewy nights he found that the inside of the tray was dewed, and the grass inside was wetter than that outside. On some nights there was no dew outside the tray; and on all nights the deposit on the inside was heavier than that on the outside. The natural conclusion was that far more vapour rose out of the ground during the night than condensed as dew on grass, and that this vapour from the ground was trapped by the tray. He next cut from the lawn a piece of turf (soil and grass) six inches square and a quarter of an inch thick. This he placed in a shallow pan; and the weight of both turf and pan was carefully noted with a sensitive balance. The pan and turf were then placed at sunset in the open cut. After five hours' exposure they were again weighed; and it was found that the turf had lost the one hundred and forty-fifth part of its weight. This loss of weight could only be accounted for by the evaporation of moisture from the turf during the formation of the dew. Experiments on bare ground and roads corroborated the hypothesis. And most scientific men now admit the fact that dew rises from the ground below.

If, then, hoar-frost is frozen dew, we must be able to show that the vapour, which is afterwards frozen, rises from the ground. Even in winter a lower stratum of soil is warmer than the surface. It is an unvarying fact that the ground a little below the surface is warmer than the air over it. If a thermometer be placed among stems below the surface,

it will register up to 18° Fahr. higher than one above. So long, then, as the surface of the ground is above the dew-point, vapour must rise from the ground. Wilson, in the experiment above quoted, observed that the thermometer on the snow registered -12°, and the one above the snow -4°; whereas one dipped three inches below the surface registered 24°. If he had only placed a thermometer's bulb on the surface of the ground underneath the snow, he would in all likelihood have been more astonished, as he would probably have found the temperature 32° (only the freezing point). Again, had he taken a thought and inserted a thermometer below the ground, he would have found it registering several degrees higher. If Wilson had done so he would not have required to cling to his theory of the deposit of hoar-frost from the atmosphere; but he would have been led to the opposite conclusion, that the evaporation of hoar-frost is from the ground, the water-vapour from the warm soil being trapped by a cold stratum of air, and frozen in being collected as dew.

For the past two or three winters we have been carefully examining the formation of hoar-frost in Strathmore, the grandest valley in Scotland. Ruthven Manse is situated in a hollow on the bank of the Isla, the principal tributary of the Tay. During the sunshine it receives more than its own share of heat, so sheltered is it from the winds. The ground all round it absorbs that heat with avidity. During the cold nights, then, we would expect that the ground should give up a considerable quantity of water-vapour. And this is the case, for we never saw a place where there is more persistent hoar-frost, or what we call rime. In the end of November last the frost was very keen, the thermometer registering 13°, 11°, and 14° Fahr. on the grass. Here and there, all over grass, earth, stones, walks, and roads, we examined the fallen leaves that had not been swept away. On the upper surface of the black-spotted leaves of the plane tree very little hoar-frost was found. But on turning up the leaves we found the under-surface quite thick with hoar-frost, as if it were snow. This was found all over the place. When a number of leaves overlapped, the hoar-frost was only on the under-surface of the lowest leaves. Under the clods, too, we found the hoar-frost, while above all was clean. The heaps of road-metal at the sides of the road mostly showed the same consistent peculiarity of the deposit. All this goes to establish the truth that dew rises from the ground, and that hoar-frost, being frozen dew, follows the same law.

WOULD WE LIVE OUR LIVES OVER AGAIN?

IT is not so very long ago yet, although we have entered the last decade of the nineteenth century, that the phrase *fin de siècle* wakened up one morning and found itself famous. Immediately, of course, it took itself for granted. It rides triumphant on the pen of every leader-writer; tyrannises over weak imaginations; and looks as if, by sheer dint of its endeavour to be more than a phrase, it were about to grow into a fact. For there can be no doubt that the primal cause of its quasi-existence is a chronological one: we are at the end of the nineteenth century; therefore the ideals of the nineteenth century have run to seed. This chronological method of marking off the ages of the world's history is not more arbitrary than it is absurd. A simple reference to a book of dates will show that for the last thousand years the final year of each century has occurred nearer the middle than the end of a well-defined period. Attempts have been made towards the close of most centuries to persuade the world that it was in a parlous state, and many people doubtless were persuaded. At the present time, when the means of publicity are at the commandment of anyone who can write a letter to the news-

papers, the detractors of this age have it in their power to create a panic in the thought, if not in the conduct, of the world; and some of them are busy at it. Probably there are no more well-meaning people in the world than lackeys. For them, as we all know, heroes have no existence; they detect the warts and blemishes in the paragons, and are not slow to point them out. If they do not expose the weaknesses of the great, how is that necessary function to be performed? On the whole it is, doubtless, right that the ages should have their lackeys to belittle them, as well as their poets to praise them; and if the world still prefers the word of the former, all we have to say is that the world is consistent.

In America we expect to find this detraction of the times loudest; for a little word whispered in an inner room of London or Paris is soon echoed back from the house-tops of Boston and Philadelphia. What is a complaint here, becomes a boast there; and *The Arena* flaunts as its motto the grievous cry of Heine, "We do not take possession of our ideas, but are possessed by them." An anonymous writer, so possessed, contributes a paper to this magazine, entitled, "Would We Live Our Lives Over Again?" going one better, as he himself might say, than Mr. Mallock's "Is Life Worth Living?" The answer is a negative—a cynical negative. No reflective sober-minded man would live his life over again, if he had the opportunity, when it came to the pinch; when he saw it stretched out before him, complete and distinct. Unless drunkards—in American, "men of bibulous habits"—forgot the horrors of a debauch, they would be deterred from another. Unless army officers forgot, after a series of campaigns, their privations, anxieties, and wounds, they would resign their commissions. Unless merchants engaged in "mighty enterprises"—American for making "corners"—forgot the terrible tension of nerve and brain they had often been subjected to, they would retire from business in middle life. Our illusions vanish at sixty, if not before, and then the thought of living "the weary uncrowned years over again is chilling, forbidding." There is no such thing as a happy life in any true sense—"veritable sense of the adjective" in American; perhaps some happy hours, some happy days; but even these are sure to be commingled with fragments of unhappiness. Happy lives! The phrase is itself a self-evident absurdity. The most satisfied and the most unsatisfied agree in the main in their estimate of life. Byron had experienced only two happy days; and Goethe, who lived—"postponed his funeral" in American—more than twice as long as Byron, experienced but eleven days' happiness; so that between an unfortunate and an abnormally fortunate man the difference in happiness is only nine days. Life may be an obligation; it is neither a delight nor an advantage. Would we live it over again—not another life, but this very life which we have lived? Will, and strength, and philosophy we can command for one journey from crib to grave; but that is quite enough. Repetition would be onerous and execrable, and none but a dolt would choose it.

Such is the American answer. Let us take one or two English answers.

"I am sixty-two," says one man, "and would be very glad indeed to live my life over again. I shall live again after death, of course, and be conscious of my existence; therefore I know that it would be a great waste of time on my part to repeat these sixty-two years exactly as I have lived them in this world, when I might be spending them in a better world under new conditions. But one does get attached to a place; besides, I think I would like to woo my wife again, to marry, and to see my boys and girls growing up about me. On the other hand, my wife died after being bed-ridden for two years; my eldest boy made sad mistakes in life; and two of my daughters are very unhappy in their marriages. If it weren't for the misery it would entail on these, I believe I would like to live my life over

again, exactly as it has been." "So would I," says another. "I'm seventy. I was flogged at school nearly every day, for I was always in mischief, and a dunce besides. I fell in love like a booby with a girl much too good for me, and when she wouldn't have me I began to go the pace; and I've been going the pace ever since. I've got all kinds of aches and pains; and I'm blotched and bloated, and most people turn away their eyes from me; but I'm in love with life. When I die I know it's all up. If there were a choice between another life and this one over again, I would have a try at the new one, of course, for I've been horribly miserable all my days. But it's not. It's this life over again, just as it was, or annihilation. By Jove, I wish I had the choice!" "I also am seventy," says a third, "and I've had so much satisfaction in life that if I had the offer, I believe I would live it over again. Happiness? Well, no; I don't believe I was ever happy. I don't believe anybody was ever happy. That's my great cure for the world—to get people to see that they never can be happy, but that they can have satisfaction. I think one of the best answers to this stupid Yankee question was given before it was put; and that's Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer.' That fine old pagan was busy all his life—too busy to be happy; but the satisfaction he had in making bad land good land!—Why, it's evident he would have liked nothing better than to live his life a hundred times over again, with a hundred Thurnaby waistes to stub. Poor starving people who have had little to do all their lives, and rich people who have had less, and some poets, artists, and perhaps the whole of Boston—which, if it isn't the hub of the universe, is certainly a diseased nervous centre—might say, 'No, we can't face our lives a second time;' but all people who have ever done any work in the world worth doing would only be too glad to do it over again."

Here we have an orthodox man, a reprobate, and one who seems not much of anything, all agreeing that life is not synonymous with torture, and that the present age, although the Jeameses and the Morgans may find it as ill-natured and unheroic as old Major Pendennis appeared to them, is quite a tractable and good-humoured age to the Laura Bells, the Captain Costigans, and the George Warringtons.

THE DRAMA.

IBSEN, in the circles of English Podsnappery, is waved aside as a Chimæra, but those of us who are still prepared to erect altars to any sort of unknown god (automatic, of course, in the underground stations—with a slot for the worshipper's penny), think of him rather as a nineteenth-century Sphinx. He has the fascination of the inscrutable, the mysterious, the enigmatic. Now the Sphinx is quite a new Idol of the Theatre. The average modern play, on the psychological side—when it has any psychology at all, which is not often—is as plain as a pikestaff; its moods, its emotions, its currents of thought, are carefully focussed to the vision of *l'homme sensuel moyen*, the ten-pound householder, the gentleman who always takes an unfair share of the room on the knife-board of the omnibus. Ibsen, on the other hand, empties out on the stage a bag of entirely new psychological tricks; with him new-fangled philosophies, religious aspirations, hitherto only dimly perceived by the Englishman in books (mostly "on grey paper with blunt type"), are for the first time seen in the playhouse; obstinate questionings of invisible things are for the first time heard there. And, along with his new subject-matter, he has brought a new *technique*. It is because, then, of the novelty of his theatre, because he is a "strong man," a "Sandow" or a "Hercules," lifting heavy philosophical weights where such weights have never been lifted before,

and because he lifts them in calm contempt of all the old orthodox laws of theatrical gymnastics, that so many of us are attracted to Ibsen; not, as a vain people supposeth, because we approve the conduct of his personages, or regard ourselves as the addressees of his ethical "message"—whatever that queer missive may be. We take a purely æsthetic delight in him, because he gives us new impressions. There is an impressionist in Mr. Henry James's latest novel, whose *animula vagula blandula* is summed up in this way: "I drift, I float, my feelings direct me—if such a life as mine may be said to have a direction. Where there's anything to feel I try to be there!" Well, dramatic criticism just now is impressionist; it is drifting and floating. There is always something to feel in the playhouse, when Ibsen is being played, and we try to be there.

The novelty of Ibsen's method must have leapt to the eyes of those who visited the Vaudeville Theatre last Monday afternoon, when *Rosmersholm* (translated by Mr. Charles Archer) was played for the first time on the English stage. Baldly and brutally stated, the story is by no means new. An adventuress, Rebecca West (not Sharp), establishes her footing in Rosmersholm, a household where the Rosmers, husband and wife, suffer from what the Divorce Court records call incompatibility of temper. By innuendo and suggestion Rebecca succeeds in convincing the wife that she is *de trop*, and that the best thing she can do is to efface herself and so leave her husband free to wed his kindred soul, the adventuress. Brought to this conviction, Mrs. Rosmer throws herself into the mill-race at the end of the garden. After living for a while in a Fool's Paradise, Rosmer learns from external sources that his wife has committed suicide not, as he supposed, in a fit of madness, but in order to make way for Rebecca. That lady's own confession then opens his eyes as to the share she had in the tragedy. Of course, there is only one end to all this. Poetic justice must be done. To expiate their crime, hers of deliberate intention, his of blind folly, they both follow the dead woman into the mill-race.

How this theme would be treated on our native stage it is not difficult to guess. We "drive at practice," as Jeremy Collier was the first to say, and the material, mechanical side of the tragedy would be the side for the English playwright. The scene of "the Bridge by Moonlight" (with real water) would be the *clou* of the piece. The adventuress (as Mr. Jerome K. Jerome knows) would wear sky-blue satin, smoke cigarettes, with her feet on the table, and probably push Mrs. Rosmer into the mill-race *propria manu*, as Lady Audley pushed the gentleman down the well. She herself would be drowned in the mill-race by accident (what time she came down that way to gloat over the late Mrs. R.), and Rosmer would be drowned in trying to rescue her. Then an old family servant (or the "comic man," reformed) would come in with a Bible, and say, "The wages of sin is death." Curtain.

In Paris, they would try another way. There would be no "stupendous mechanical effects." Everything would be done by talk, and within four walls, as everything is actually done in Ibsen's play. But the personages would not talk much about themselves; they would exchange repartees and listen to a long-haired poet reciting *décadent* or *déliquescent* verses, while they themselves would be explained and commented on by a third person, a sort of lecturer without the wand. But both French and English playwright, be sure, would have one thing in common: they would both begin at the beginning, i.e., start with Rebecca's entry into Rosmersholm, and show us Mrs. Rosmer in the flesh.

Now turn to Ibsen, and see how fresh, how audacious, his treatment is. He starts—where the undergraduate's Ibis walked safest—in the middle, and works backwards. Mrs. Rosmer's suicide has occurred some time before the curtain rises, and for a good half of the play "the enigma of the mill-race," as one of the personages calls it, remains unsolved.

Through two entire acts we are left without any hint that Rebecca is not what she seems, that she is other than a "sympathetic" character. It is not until the third act is nearly over that we discover that it was this apparently harmless young lady, with the mild demeanour and the advanced Liberal opinions, who practically sent Mrs. Rosmer headlong into the mill-race. And why she did it we do not learn until just before the curtain finally falls. Note that, whatever we learn, we learn at first hand, from the characters themselves, not from a Dumasian commentator or *raisonneur*. Ibsen's personages always explain themselves, analyse themselves, put themselves under the microscope, pull themselves up by the roots to watch how they are growing, eviscerate themselves to see where the golden eggs come from. They are for ever asking themselves: Why did I come into the world, and what (to speak as M. Paul Bourget doth) is my *état d'âme*? And what a curious, remote "soul-state" that is! When we come to examine it, we find that the plot of *Rosmersholm* which I, purposely, began by stating in terms of vulgar melodrama, serves Ibsen as the sub-structure for nothing either vulgar or melodramatic, but for a veritable Soul's Tragedy. Rebecca is found to have established herself in the Rosmersholm household because, if you please, she saw there scope for the development of her "views," because Rosmer would make her a useful intellectual companion—what Academic youth calls a "reading-chum." "I wanted to take my share in the life of the new era that was dawning, with all its new ideas. We two, I thought, should march onward in freedom, side by side. But between you and freedom rose that dismal, insurmountable barrier—" Mrs. Rosmer. Hence the tragedy of the mill-race. Note, too, that the old concept of free-will, which had found a last place of refuge in the theatre, is now finally abolished. Rebecca has a metaphysical explanation for her conduct, pat. "You think I was cool and calculating and self-possessed all the time! I was not then the same woman as I am now, as I stand here relating it all. And then there are two sorts of will in us, I believe! I wanted Beata away; but all the same I never believed that it would come to pass. And yet I could not stop. I had to venture the least little bit further.—That is the way such things come about." One cannot listen to that sort of thing without recognising in Ibsen a new stage-force. All his drama is internal, the evolution of successive "soul-states." Even Rebecca's confession is not brought about, as in other hands it assuredly would be, by external means. She simply makes it to restore to Rosmer (whom she has learnt to love) his sense of "innocence," to lift from his mind the consciousness of guilt which prevents him from continuing his life-work of "ennobling human souls, making every man in the land a nobleman." Of course he is not troubled by any feeling so old-fashioned and unscientific as mere remorse. There can be no remorse where there has been no free-will. Rosmer, too, has his own soul's tragedy in his conversion, under Rebecca's guidance, from conservatism to liberalism, from orthodoxy (he is a retired clergyman) to free-thought. All this is very piquant, *bizarre*, fresh, of absorbing interest to the serious spectator, and to the mere eclectic *dilettante* (say the Des Essarts of M. Huysmans), at least as fascinating as a Japanese curio or the rare edition (uncut) of the "Pastissier François." One feels that Ibsen's people are ourselves, yet not ourselves. They are intensely human, yet intensely Scandinavian—much farther from us English, with their introspection, their gravity, their melancholy, their morbid intellectuality, than the mere extent of the voyage by steamer from Hull to Bergen. No wonder the blither spirits among them, the Ulric Brendels and the Ejler Lövborgs, take to drink, for they breathe an atmosphere, in Johnson's phrase, of "insipidated gloom." I am too grateful to the little band of earnest young players who gave us the opportunity of seeing this remarkable play, to bring the heavy

artillery of criticism to bear upon their acting, Miss Farr, Mr. F. R. Benson, Mr. Athol Forde, and their playfellows, all did their best; though that best may not have resulted in a really adequate interpretation of *Rosmersholm*. And if you ask me what English players at the present moment *could* interpret *Rosmersholm*, I really cannot tell you.

A. B. W.

THE WEEK.

THE election of Mr. F. V. EDGEWORTH to the Professorship of Political Economy at Oxford is not altogether in harmony with the traditions or present tendencies of the University. He has had a distinguished career as a teacher and lecturer in London—at King's College and elsewhere—and he has done much for what may roughly be described as the mathematical side of economics; but that side, unfortunately, is precisely the one that Oxford knows nothing whatever about; and at the British Association last year, it was said, there were hardly three people present who could understand the recondite paper he contributed. The prevalent tendency at Oxford is towards the historical side of the study, and his undergraduate hearers will mostly be reading for the school of Modern History. His predecessor, PROF. THOROLD ROGERS, did more for this branch than any Englishman; and among the younger graduates there is a distinct movement analogous to the "Professorial Socialism" of the Inductive School in Germany—which finds its expression in industrial conferences (with Mr. TOM MANN and Mr. BEN TILLET as invited guests), and a Christian Socialist Guild which has just started a very satisfactory quarterly magazine. Were the electors (who include LORD SALISBURY) anxious not to encourage this tendency?

It is rumoured that "P. H. X.," whose admirable book on Tunis we reviewed last week, is BARON D'ESTOURNELLES DE CONSTANT, Counsellor at the French Embassy, formerly head of the department of Protectorates in the French Foreign Office, before that Assistant French Resident in Tunis, and before that, again, one of the Secretaries of the French Embassy in London.

NOBODY, not Mr. R. L. STEVENSON, not even Mr. SWINBURNE, has praised CHARLES READE more heartily than Mr. WALTER BESANT; and nobody, except perhaps OUIDA, has praised him so highly as that champion of letters. Mr. BESANT, if we recollect rightly, asserted that neither SCOTT nor THACKERAY stood in the direct line from FIELDING—that CHARLES READE was the legitimate successor of the first English novelist. The pity is that READE'S novels cannot be procured in anything like a worthy form. At last MESSRS. CHATTO & WINDUS are setting themselves to remove this reproach; at least, as regards the shorter stories. "Peg Woffington" and "Christie Johnstone" have just appeared as the second and third volumes of their very pretty new series, "My Library." We hope the "Cloister and the Hearth" and "Griffith Gaunt" will soon be treated as kindly.

THE fourth volume of "My Library" will be a selection from LANDOR—his "Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare" and his "Conference of Master Edmund Spenser." We are very glad indeed to see the first of these dramatic pieces appearing in a popular form. Since LAMB said of it that "only two men could have written it, the man who did write it or he of whom it was written," many conflicting opinions have been expressed of this

work, and it has recently, with some authority, been pronounced the nearest approach to a failure among LANDOR's longer writings. We disagree with this entirely. Like many other works of many writers, most people would require to read the "Citation" when they are young in order to form a taste for it. For example, all SCOTT's poems and some of his novels, KEATS's "Endymion," and MARLOWE's "Hero and Leander," are very seldom duly appreciated except by those who have learned to like them in their youth. Of all LANDOR's writings, the "Citation" is just that one likely to displease the man of culture who reads it for the first time. Culture becomes too often an intellectual indigestion, a surfeit of thoughts and impressions. Those who have condemned LANDOR's "Trial of Shakespeare" will be found, we expect, to have lost their roast beef brains, if not their "roast beef stomachs."

THERE is no definite announcement as yet of new volumes by either LORD TENNYSON or MR. SWINBURNE, but MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN, whose long-delayed *Modern Review* is promised for May, is about to publish, through MESSRS. CHATTO & WINDUS, a rhyme for the time, called "The Outcast." It is to be copiously illustrated. The titles of the four portions into which the poem is divided—"The First Christmas Eve," "Madonna," "The First Haven," and "An Interlude"—would seem to indicate that this is another poetical version of the life of Christ. Two books of verses—MRS. EVEREST RADFORD's "Light Load" and MR. WALTER CRANE's "Renaissance," with designs by the author—will be published shortly by MR. ELKIN MATHEWS. The next volume of the "Saga Library" will contain the "Eyrbyggja Saga," one of the most historic of Icelandic sagas. The "Heath-Slayings Saga" will be added as an appendix.

AMONG forthcoming books there are some interesting announcements in biography. DR. SMILES has almost ready, under the title of "A Publisher and his Friends," a selection from the papers of the

"Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,"

MR. JOHN MURRAY. The correspondence of his great *clientèle* with the famous publisher cannot fail to throw many a sidelight on the characters of BYRON, SCOTT, WASHINGTON IRVING, COLERIDGE, and a host of other writers. MR. W. CLARK RUSSELL has passed the proofs of his "Life of Lord Collingwood," which will contain new matter and some unpublished letters. COLLINGWOOD's fame as an ocean warrior ranks next to NELSON's. It is a curious fact that from the time he succeeded the latter in command of the *Hinchinbroke*, he continued to step into the posts vacated by the promotion of NELSON until NELSON's star set at Trafalgar and that of COLLINGWOOD took its place. The next volume of the "English Men of Action" series will be "Warwick, the Kingmaker," by MR. C. W. OMAN. In the "Minerva Library" we are to have reprints of MR. JOHN BIGELOW's edition of the "Autobiography and Letters of Benjamin Franklin"; a revised version of PROFESSOR C. W. YONGE's "Life of the Duke of Wellington"; and MR. J. H. INGRAM's "Life of Edgar Allan Poe." The second number of MESSRS. METHUEN & Co.'s "English Leaders of Religion" series is "John Wesley," by J. H. OVERTON, M.A. Lives of KEBLE, SIMEON, WILBERFORCE, F. D. MAURICE, CHALMERS, and others are in preparation.

In fiction an old experiment is to be attempted again. Undaunted by the failure of the "Miz-Maze," a story by six writers which appeared a number of years ago, some twenty authors—surely they are women—are about to issue from the offices of the *Gentlewoman* "A Novel Novel," in twenty chapters, each by a different writer. Many readers will be glad to learn that MESSRS.

CASELL & Co. intend to publish, under the title of "Noughts and Crosses," a collection of short stories by "Q," including those contributed to THE SPEAKER. MR. FISHER UNWIN promises a collected edition of MISS ROSA MACKENZIE KETTLE's novels, and a translation of PUSHKIN's stories by MRS. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS. MESSRS. WARD, LOCK & Co. have almost ready an edition of MR. OSCAR WILDE's "Dorian Gray," which appeared originally in *Lippincott*; and MESSRS. WARD & DOWNEY will publish next month "The Great Men and a Practical Novelist," a volume of short stories and long by MR. JOHN DAVIDSON, with some illustrations by MR. EDWIN JOHN ELLIS.

THE three-volume novels of the week are "A Bitter Birthright" (HURST & BLACKETT), by DORA RUSSELL; "That Affair" (F. V. WHITE), by ANNIE THOMAS (MRS. PENDER CUDLIP); and "Stephen Elliott's Daughter" (WARNE), by MRS. J. H. NEEDELL. In two volumes we have "The Lost Manuscript" (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company. London: BRENTANO), an authorised translation from the sixteenth German edition of GUSTAV FREYTAG's novel. This is an *édition de luxe*; the binding, paper, and type are all particularly exquisite. Other two-volume novels are "Lady Merton" (BURNS & OATES), a tale of the Eternal City, by J. C. HEYWOOD; "A Winter's Tale" (BENTLEY), by MARY E. MANN; and "He Fell Among Thieves" (MACMILLAN), by D. CHRISTIE MURRAY and HENRY HERMAN. In one volume we have "Paul Creighton" (DIGBY & LONG), by GERTRUDE G. DAVISON; "Bellevue" (GRIFFITH, FARRAN), by W. M. E. JAY; and "Was She His Wife" (EDEN, REMINGTON), translated from the German of W. HEIMBURG by HELEN WOLFF.

BOOKS about London are innumerable, but the subject is inexhaustible, and so the inevitable is about to happen. MR. ELLIOT STOCK will publish in March the first number of the *London and Middlesex Note-Book*. The new magazine will be an illustrated quarterly, and will treat of the local history and antiquities of the City of London and County of Middlesex. MR. W. P. W. PHILLIMORE is to be the editor.

GIORGIO GIULIO CLOVIO, a pupil of GIULIO ROMANO's and a close student of the works of MICHAEL ANGELO, was the rival of BENVENUTO CELLINI. The rivalry has not been generally admitted by posterity, in all likelihood because CLOVIO did not leave an autobiography; but in England we are to have an opportunity of judging of the matter. MR. JOHN W. BRADLEY has written, and MR. BERNARD QUARITCH has published, the "Life and Works" of this artist, with notices of his contemporaries, and of the art of book decoration in the sixteenth century.

A WRITER in these columns recently expressed wonder why the HON. IGNATIUS DONELLY had not attempted to prove that CAXTON was the discoverer of America. The suggestion is beside the mark. It was not CAXTON but CABOT, if MR. and MRS. SHIPLEY are right in their "English Rediscovery of America" (ELLIOT STOCK). It is a work, however, deserving more attention than the labours of the American COLUMBUS, or should we now say, CABOT, of mares' nests. Curiously enough, there has just been published "The Spanish Letter of Columbus to Luis de Sant' Angel." MR. BERNARD QUARITCH, who possesses the unique copy of the original edition printed in Barcelona in 1493, is the publisher. It is one of the few remaining letters of COLUMBUS, and describes his epoch-making voyage.

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY's Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

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THE Spanish are said to be generally indifferent to literature, hence the battle between romanticism and realism in Spain, which began in 1875, is not a noisy one. There is no mob to appeal to. One novelist, ARMANDO PALACIO VALDÉS, has succeeded in some measure in wakening the Spanish from their literary torpor; and in his latest novel, "Froth"—*La Esperance*—(HEINEMANN), translated by CLARA BELL, and edited by EDMUND GOSSE, appears in this country by special arrangement simultaneously with the publication of the original in the Spanish. It is a satiric picture of fashionable life in Madrid. Popular knowledge of VALDÉS in this country has hitherto been confined to his "Marta y Maria," translated into English under the title of the "Marquis of Peñalta" in 1883.

MR. LUCY, the well-known journalist, has been contributing to the *Illustrated London News* one or two pleasant papers on that question of which he may well claim to be a master—the art of London correspondence. Some day, it is to be hoped, the whole story at which MR. LUCY has merely hinted in his clever essay will be told to the world, and we shall learn the truth about those remarkable beings who, in the early days of the Provincial press, delighted and astounded their readers by their revelations of Cabinet secrets and scandals in high life. It has been wickedly asserted that most of these gentlemen viewed life from the back parlours of Camberwell or the tavern windows of Fleet Street. All that is changed now, of course, and the London correspondent is really a responsible and well-informed personage. But an interesting chapter in the history of English journalism would be that which gave us the genesis of this remarkable being.

THE thirty-three pages which an *Edinburgh* reviewer has just devoted to "American Fiction" rest on the mournful error that criticism comes of much reading in obscure place. Good, no doubt, it is to be on speaking terms with the works of HUGH BRACKENRIDGE, MATILDA WARREN, and MRS. TENNEY; and, no doubt, these writers have been dead long enough to be of interest to the *Edinburgh Review*. But when, talking of more inspiring persons, the critic informs us, almost in one breath, that HAWTHORNE was a sound-minded, healthy optimist and an unaffected, but never a misanthropic, cynic, we feel we could do with a gentleman who should be less sedulous and more one-sided. Also, though a survey which includes MRS. CHILD'S "Philothea" and WARE'S "Probus" may well omit MARK TWAIN'S "Huckleberry Finn" and STOCKTON'S "Rudder Grange," we think it might have been headed by some more apposite title than "American Fiction."

A CIVIL engineer in St. Petersburg, named KERSHA, has established a review which he calls the *Pantobiblion*, and for which, in the interests of purely scientific inquiry, he invites the aid of students in all parts of Europe. He proposes to deal with the scientific literature of all countries every month, especially with engineering, and he hopes that literary correspondence and books for review will be showered upon him. It is an amiable and praiseworthy enterprise, but what does the Russian censor think? What chance is there that a scientific work will not be regarded as a piece of Nihilism in disguise? How many books for review will reach MR. KERSHA without bearing traces of the censor's peculiar intelligence? There does not seem to be much advantage in sending literature of any kind to St. Petersburg.

THE Guild and School of Handicraft have issued the first volume of their "Transactions," consisting

mainly of lectures by distinguished artists, prefaced by an interesting account of the enterprise from the pen of the editor, MR. C. R. ASHBEE. The object of the School is to train young journeymen handicraftsmen in the principles of artistic design, and the printing of this volume testifies to the success of the projectors in one important branch of their work. The lectures of MR. HOLMAN HUNT, MR. RICHMOND, MR. ALMA TADEMA, MR. HENRY HOLLIDAY, and others, make excellent reading, even for the uninitiated.

MR. T. A. TROLLOPE once planned, wrote, and sold a two-volume novel, the MS. amounting to 500 post 8vo pages, in twenty-four days. Fleet Street still echoes with legends of the journalistic performances against time of MR. WILLIAM BLACK and SIR EDWIN ARNOLD; and everybody knows the rapid rate at which SCOTT, the elder DUMAS, and ANTHONY TROLLOPE produced their fiction. But these great names, according to *Cassell's Saturday Journal*, so far as rate of production is concerned, must bow before that of the redoubtable NED BUNTLINE. This American author of between three and four hundred novels and sketches once earned in six weeks by hard writing £2,300. We do not wish to snatch the palm from NED BUNTLINE in the matter of rapidity among modern writers, but as far as remuneration is concerned, his £2,300 for six weeks' work does not beat the record of over £8,000 paid to SCOTT for "Woodstock," the work of three months.

REFERRING to some scratching with a diamond on a pane of glass in a house in Spey Street, Edinburgh, at one time inhabited by CARLYLE, MR. LAURENCE HUTTON, in an article in the *March Harper*, says it is not improbable that the man who called CHARLES LAMB an "emblem of imbecility, bodily and spiritual," might have written his own mother down as a "sillie-body." The sneer is as needless as it is stupid. CARLYLE was utterly unable to understand LAMB; his mother was the one person of his acquaintance whom he knew best, understood best, and loved and respected most. Why does MR. HUTTON spell CRUKSHANKS "Crukshanks," and why does he commit the double blunder of calling MRS. MACLEHOSE, BURNS'S Clarinda, "Mrs. Maclehouse" and "Clorinda"? Nevertheless, his article, "The Literary Landmarks of Edinburgh," is very entertaining.

THE AMERICAN-IRISH AND MR. PARNELL.

NEW YORK, February 16th, 1891.

IT has been suggested to me by an English friend that I should try to give you some information about the effect on Irish-American opinion of the split among the Irish Home Rulers. In order to get at this with some approach to accuracy, I asked one of the most prominent Irishmen in New York, both in the political and commercial world, to put me in communication with a few of the unmistakable representatives of the various sections of Irish Nationalists in the Eastern States, and he was good enough to collect a small party of them at his house for the purpose of enlightening me. They were all Catholics; they had all taken part, more or less prominently, in the Home Rule movement in this country under the Parnell régime, and some had figured in the earlier Fenian movement. They all carry considerable weight with their countrymen, and some make a figure in American politics; one occupies an official position of importance, and one had been in more or less sympathy with the dynamite faction. Of the whole party I think it might be fairly said that they would only have to interrogate themselves to know how Irish-Americans

feel about any Irish question, even if they were not in close relation with the Nationalists in the Eastern States. All had come to this country, I should add, in early youth. There were no refugees among them. As they talked to me with perfect freedom, I shall not mention names, or give any more particular description of them; but I may mention that none of them had any connection with the press. They would, in short, in many ways surprise that portion of the English public which believes, with Mr. Goldwin Smith, that the American-Irish are largely drunken persons without any regular calling, who pass their time contriving plans for the slaughter of negroes. I shall try to give the substance of what they said from notes made as soon as I got home.

In the first place, all except one were anti-Parnellite; but all except one expressed great reluctance about throwing him over as the leader of the Irish Party in Parliament, while joining in severe condemnation of his recent conduct. The reasons they gave for valuing him highly were, of course, the great impetus he had given to the Irish question in English politics, and the extremely important land legislation which he had directly or indirectly brought about. No subsequent misconduct could blot out the memory of these services. They were greater than any man had rendered except O'Connell, and in some respects they were greater than O'Connell's. His fall was, no doubt, dreadful; but he must always fill a very important place in Irish history. It would, they thought, speak very badly for the moral qualities as well as the political capacity of the Irish race, if they had shelved a leader of this sort, without deliberation or inquiry, the minute they heard something to his discredit. They thought Gladstone was too hasty in repudiating him, but whether he was or not, it was not reasonable to expect the Irish, whom Parnell had served so well, to act with equal promptitude. Common decency required that they should wait and hear evidence, and see what was to be done next. As to trusting Mr. Gladstone implicitly about the Irish problem, it had to be borne in mind that he was not converted to Home Rule by the merits of the case. He had acknowledged himself that he had been won over to it by the appearance of eighty-six Home Rulers in Parliament after the extension of the franchise in Ireland; that is, he did not at first give in his adhesion to it as an Irish right, but as something which it would be inconvenient for Englishmen any longer to refuse. It was not, therefore, wholly unreasonable to doubt whether he could be depended on to carry out the Home Rule programme, if through any change of circumstances the Irish demand for it became less formidable. At all events, although they were willing to trust him, they could not judge with unmitigated severity any Irish leader in Ireland who felt himself unable to do so.

In answer to the inquiry what proportion of the Irish Nationalists here are in any sense wedded to revolutionary courses and would be likely to adhere, if necessary, to Parnell through thick and thin, and still represented in a certain way the Home Rule idea, they all agreed in putting it down at from 20 to 30 per cent., certainly not more. Fully 70 per cent., if not more, were entirely won over to Constitutional agitation under Mr. Gladstone's leadership and in alliance with the English Liberals.

Nothing in the conversation, however, surprised me so much as their unanimous contempt for the land question. Not one professed to take any interest in it, or professed any willingness to subscribe money for the aid of distressed farmers, whether evicted or in possession. They thought enough had been done for the farmers, who were perpetually complaining of the way they were dealt with by Englishmen, and yet did little, compared with the Irish town population, to aid the effort to secure local self-government. They were ashamed of this continual begging for the Irish tenants. They

thought it disgraced the Irish name and character in the eyes of the world, and somewhat justified Mr. Froude's reproach levelled at the Irish in the lecture he delivered here, that with all their moaning and groaning about English oppression, they never made really formidable efforts to get rid of it. They held that there could be no adequate settlement of the land question until it passed, like the land question in every other country in the world, into the hands of the people who lived on the land; or, in other words, that any agitation in or on behalf of the tenants, except political agitation, was a waste of time and labour. They were displeased, too, with the use of funds subscribed in America for the trial of such experiments as "the new Tipperary," and indeed for any agrarian purpose whatever. They were all very positive in saying that no money would or could be raised here for any Irish use until the divisions were healed. The class of Irish here who can subscribe money would not subscribe it to be fought over in Ireland.

One of the things in this talk which surprised me most was the importance which they attached to Parnell's belonging to the class of landed gentry, though this harmonised somewhat with their views about the farmers' grievances. They regretted much the absence of any "upper class" participation in the Nationalist movement, and its consequent great dependence on the mob for leadership. I could not clearly make out whether this was due to a desire to give it greater respectability in the eyes of foreigners, or to a sincere belief in the superior capacity of leadership of the landlord class. But there was no question about the value they attached to Parnell's social position. As to the clergy, they were unanimous in the belief that they no longer occupied their old position in Irish political struggles, that they doubtless could acquire and retain influence in politics by swimming with the tide of popular feeling, but they had no longer the power to stem or direct it. The time when they were prominent and necessary in Irish politics was in the old days when the Irish Nationalists were a handful of half-starved and cowed peasants, but with the use of new Irelands in America and the Colonies their aid was no longer necessary.

As might be expected, they were of opinion that Irish violence was in some degree justified by the difficulty of making Englishmen listen to Irish complaints. They pointed to the fact that although, as all Englishmen now admit, the Irish have heretofore had serious grievances which are now redressed, none of these grievances owed their redress to Irish appeals or remonstrances. On the contrary, their removal was in nearly every case due to the alarm and scandal excited by Irish disorder. This might be explained by the inefficacy of Irish rhetoric, the extravagance of Irish agitators, and the inability of Irishmen to agree among themselves as to the remedies required; but the way people talk about their woes is product of their temperament and character, which they cannot change in a day, even if they find it useless as a political weapon. They will resort to other things sooner than continue to suffer. People ought not to suffer because their oppressors think their rhetoric feeble. Irish have had to experiment on the English just as the English have experimented on the Irish, and have had to use such means of attracting the English attention as they found by experience to be necessary. Fenianism, for instance, wild and insensate as it seemed at the time, was not fruitless. It brought the Irish question up again in English politics, and made it a burning question, and prepared the way for all the reforms which have since been carried out. Some of the foregoing was brought out by my questions, but a large part of it was volunteered statement, in which the speaker followed his own line.

There was one point I did not touch on, because I thought it might to some of those present be possibly a sensitive one. I mean the part the Irish play in

the misgovernment of American cities. Probably none of them would have denied the effectiveness with which this is used against the cause of Home Rule in England, and I should have liked much to hear what they had to say about it. But it would have been difficult to discuss it with freedom, in view of the fact that our host—a successful merchant and an Irish Catholic—was, to my own knowledge, one of the two best mayors we have had in New York in the last forty years. Moreover I might and probably would have been met, as an illustration of the absurdity of the talk one hears in England of the Irish want of political capacity, with the fact that this city—the second greatest in the civilised world—is now governed, *with the consent of the inhabitants*, by four Irishmen, who have risen, from the humblest walks of life, with no advantages of any description. The government they supply is abominably bad; but political capacity is not always shown by giving people good government; it is also shown in getting people to submit to bad government, and, in truth, is shown in a higher degree by getting them to submit to bad government than to good government. The four Irishmen of whom I speak are the leaders of the Tammany Society, a very corrupt and vicious organisation. It was thoroughly exposed to the voters at the last mayoral election in the most minute particulars, but the four, nevertheless, managed to retain their hold of the city government, after a thorough canvass and a fair election. Yet, as I have said, they are obscure and ignorant men, with shady antecedents, but they have been kept in power with the consent or connivance of the majority of the inhabitants. I may call them after this as many bad names as I please, but it is ridiculous to say they have no talent for command or for organisation.

E. L. GODKIN.

THE EMPRESS FREDERICK IN PARIS.

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, February 25th.

NATIONS, like individuals, are subject to periodical epidemics which attack their constitutions according to certain known laws. We have had in turn the spy mania, the war mania, and the crowned heads mania. It is on these occasions that one recognises what a fearful tyrant Democracy can be, without, on that account, the streets being made to run with blood. During the past week the sun never shone brighter than it has done in the French metropolis, whose traditional gaiety has not been eclipsed for an instant.

And yet the leading event of the week, however brilliant, has not been unrelieved by clouds. The Empress Frederick's visit, which was heralded as an augury of peace, is being made a subject of war. It is very unfortunate that it should be so; but so it is. Whose fault is this? it will be asked. There are situations in life where it may be equally unfortunate to speak or to be silent; to sit still or to move. Royal and Imperial visits are among the most difficult matters of diplomacy, the proper ordering of which demands almost as much care as the drafting of a treaty.

Apart from the private reasons underlying the Imperial visit, it was assuredly a laudable desire to endeavour to promote a better state of feeling between the two leading nations of the Continent so strangely separated by the chances of war. But, as the result shows, it is more than doubtful whether the means chosen to effect this were the best. To stake a scheme of reconciliation on such questionable counters as the inclinations and sentiments of artists was a daring throw. It was a case of double or quits with loaded dice.

Before the arrival of the Imperial widow within our walls, it was given forth by the German Embassy that Her Majesty would probably receive visits from

certain painters, and that the Empress would doubtless visit certain studios. We have not heard of any artists having called at the Rue de Lille, but there has been no lack of information about the visits paid to their palatial residences. Royal and feminine diplomacy is believed to have been exercised with great tact and ability, with the result that the desired aim has not been reached.

This mortifying failure can surprise only those who are unacquainted with the French character—*fin de siècle*. The mistakes Royalties and their advisers make is to suppose that they have a world to deal with similar to their own. As M. Dufaure told Lord Lyons, "You cannot presume to know Paris if you do not know any fifth-floor people"—an ignorance to which the veteran ambassador was obliged to plead guilty. There are the crazy fanatics and so-called patriots; the host of emotional scribes—male and female—who pretend to lay down the law here. These people have to be reckoned with. It is lamentable, as M. Jules Ferry has admitted, that a great nation should be at the mercy of such elements; but there is no help for it. If it only depended on the well-bred people, France and Germany would long ago have been, if not in each other's arms, yet on terms that do not exclude mutual self-respect; whereas at present, owing to this ridiculous painters' *fiasco*, the relations can only become more strained. There is a feeling of discomfort; the prolongation of the Imperial visit is beginning to act on the nerves of the Parisians—we are such nerveless folk. We do not wish to be rude, but we do not exactly know how to behave. It cannot be agreeable to the courteous instincts of the French to feel that the Elysée can take no notice of the Empress; and to remain a week in the French capital without acknowledging the existence of the Chief of the State or his consort, does not strike one as in accordance with the fitness of things. If the French were more at home with Holy Writ, they would recall the proverb of withdrawing thy feet from thy neighbour's house, lest he be weary of thee.

The negative outcome of all this is rejoicing the hearts of those German Conservatives who do not believe in and do not desire reconciliation with France. They fear that if the consummation devoutly to be hoped were realised, a fatal blow would be dealt against the autocratic *régime* which is their mainstay. This party, which has never ceased to regret the fall of Prince Bismarck, can now point triumphantly to one of the effects of "petticoat government." They would never have permitted this Imperial adventure, which courted failure. It may sound flattering to the French *amour propre* to send autographic notes of Hannibal's cavalry tactics—"The better to eat you with, my dear!"—but the French generals who failed to appear at the bidding of the widow of the victor of Wörth do not seem to view it in that light.

AN INTERRUPTION.

From Algernon Dexter, writer of *vers de société*, London, to Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

"MY DEAR PRINCE,—Our correspondence has dwindled of late. Indeed, I do not remember to have heard from you since I wrote to acknowledge your kindness in standing godfather to my boy Jack (now rising two), and the receipt of the jewelled scimitar which, as a christening present, accompanied your consent. Still I do not forget the promise you exacted after lunch at the Mitre Hotel, Oxford, on the day when we took our B.A. degree together—that if, in my London life, I should come across any circumstance that seemed to throw fresh light on the dark, complex workings of the human heart, or at least likely to prove of interest to a student of his fellow-men, I would write it down and despatch it to you, % The Negus. During the period of my engagement to Violet these communi-

cations of mine (you will admit) were frequent enough: since our marriage they have become, perhaps, something too desultory. Possibly I lose alertness while I put on flesh: it is the natural hebetude of happiness. But your forgiveness is about to be purchased by a human document that should atone for years of silence. Upon my soul, Prince, it will make you sit up.

"Until last night the Garraways were a force in this capital. They were three,—Garraway himself, who owned a million or more, and to my knowledge drank threepenny and smoked Returns in his Louis XV. library; Mrs. Garraway, as beautiful as any two women in London and cleverer than any four; and Billy, their child, aged seven-and-a-half. To-day their whereabouts would be as difficult to find as the boy in Mrs. Hemans's ballad. You jump to the guess that they have lost their money. You are wrong.

"It was acquired in the tinned-fruit trade, which, I understand, does not fluctuate severely, though doubtless in the last instance dependent on the crops. Garraway and his wife were ready to lose any amount of it at cards, which accounts for a measure of their success. It had been found, with Mrs. Garraway, in San Francisco, by a destitute Englishman who had worked his passage out around Cape Horn. With his exceeding wealth there grew a desire to spend it in his own country; and the family landed at Liverpool on Billy's sixth birthday. I must tell you that the man loved his wife and child with a consuming passion. He had every reason; for two lovelier creatures I have never set eyes on.

"I first made Billy's acquaintance in the Row, when a capable groom was teaching him to ride a very small skewbald pony. This happened soon after our Jack was born, when I was perforce companionless: but as soon as Violet could ride again, she, too, fell a victim to the red curls and seraphic face of this urchin. And so, when Billy's mother began, later in the season, to appear in the Row, with Billy (now promoted to a larger pony) beside her, we quickly made friends. By this time she had been 'presented,' and was finding her feet in London. Henceforward her career resembled not so much a conquest as the progress of a Roman emperor. Even the just estimate of our Western manners which you, my dear Prince, formed at Balliol College, Oxford, will not enable you to realise it. But then, in those days, we talked over-much of Arnold Toynbee and neglected *baccarat*. By the time the Garraways took their house near Hyde Park Corner philanthropy was beginning to stale, and I doubt if Mrs. Garraway ever had occasion to use Toynbee's name. Her husband was understood to spend most of his time in the City, looking after the interests of tinned fruits and making small fortunes with his redundant cash.

"You will readily understand that we soon came to see little of our new acquaintances. A small private income and the trivial price commanded by society verses in this country (so different in many respects from Abyssinia) would not allow us to compete. But we were invited now and then to their dinners, and noted how the status of our fellow-guests advanced by leaps and bounds. Last night there were potentates at Mrs. Garraway's—several imported and one of British growth, a native Royal Highness. To-day—but you shall hear it in the fewest words.

"Three days back, Billy failed to turn up in the Row. We met his mother riding alone, and asked the reason. She told us the child had taken a slight chill and she thought it wiser to keep him at home.

"On the next day he was absent, and yesterday. In the evening we went to the Garraways' dance. The thing was wonderfully done. An exuberant vegetation that suggested a tropical forest was qualified by the presence of some two hundred people. It was impossible to dance or to feel lonely; and our hostess looked as radiant as the moon. She touched, or almost touched, the bright peak of her aspirations

and its glow was reflected in her face. We shook hands with her and were swallowed in the crowd.

"About an hour after, as I watched the crush from a recess beside an open window and listened to the waltz that the band was playing, Garraway himself thrust his way towards me. He was crumpled and perspiring copiously; but the glory of it sat on his mean, freckled face, as openly as on his wife's lovely features.

"'I've not been here above ten minutes,' he explained; 'busy in the City, you know.'

"'How's Billy?' I asked, after a few commonplace words.

"'Off colour. Had to send for the doctor, yes-tiddy. I didn't see him myself—I started for the City early. It's been busy for me this last day or two. But my wife tells me it's no more than a cold. He'll be out in a day or so, and gettin' stopped by the police for gallopin'—'

"At this point he conceived a desire to shake hands with somebody ten paces off, and was lost to me.

"I cannot tell, my dear Prince, how long it was before His Royal Highness arrived. But I know that shortly after his arrival, while I still lounged in the recess and hoped that Violet would soon drift in my direction and allow herself to be taken home, the throng within the rooms began to thin in a most curious manner. How it happened—whence it started and how it spread—I cannot tell you. Only it seemed as if something began to be whispered, and the whisper melted the crowd like sugar. Almost before I grew aware of what was happening I could see, across the room, the great guest talking to Mrs. Garraway, and could mark their faces. His was cast into a polite, but uneasy smile. Hers was white as chalk, though her eyes were returning the smile. At that moment Violet came towards me.

"'Take me home,' she said, and shivered.

"'What on earth is the matter?'

"She pulled me by the sleeve. I looked up and saw a white-haired man, of military carriage, standing beside His Royal Highness as if anxious to speak to him, as soon as Mrs. Garraway would allow. I saw also that Mrs. Garraway would not allow, but talked desperately. I saw the groups of people, up and down the room, regarding her even as we. And then the door was flung open.

"Garraway came running in with Billy in his arms:—or rather, with Billy's body. The child had died at four, that afternoon, of congestion of the lungs.

"I got Violet out of the room as soon as I could. The man's language was frightful—filthy: and his wife answered him back. It was a babel of 'Frisco' curses: but I remember one clear sentence of hers from the din. 'You —! Do you think I've not suffered?'

"All the way home Violet kept sobbing and crying out that she was never driven so slowly. She was convinced that something had happened to her own Jack. She ran up to the nursery at once and woke your godchild out of a healthy sleep: and he arose in his full strength and yelled.

May 31st, 189—.

Q.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,
Friday, February 27th, 1891.

THE vivacious, the in fact far too vivacious, Abbé Galiani, writing to Madame d'Épinay, observes with unwonted seriousness, "Je remarque que le caractère dominant des Français perçez toujours. Ils sont causeurs, raisonneurs, badins par essence; un mauvais tableau enfante une bonne brochure; ainsi, vous parlerez mieux des arts que vous n'en ferez jamais. Il se trouvera, au bout du compte, dans quelques siècles, que vous aurez le mieux raisonné, le mieux discuté ce que toutes les autres nations auront

fait de mieux." To affect to foretell the final balance of an account which is not to be closed for centuries demands either celestial assurance or Neapolitan impudence; but, regarded as a guess, the Abbé's was a shrewd one. The *post-mortem* may prove him wrong, but can hardly prove him absurdly wrong.

We owe much to the French—enlightenment, pleasure, variety, surprise; they have helped us in a great many ways: amongst others, to play an occasional game of hide-and-seek with Puritanism, a distraction in which there is no manner of harm; unless, indeed, the demure damsel were to turn huffy, and after we had hidden ourselves, refuse to find us again. Then, indeed—to use a colloquial expression—there would be the devil to pay.

But nowhere have the French been so helpful, in nothing else has the change from the native to the foreign article been so delightful, as in this very matter of criticism upon which, the Abbé Galiani had seized more than a hundred years ago. Mr. David Stott has lately published two small volumes of translations from the writings of Sainte-Beuve, the famous critic, who so long has been accepted as the type of all that is excellent in French criticism. French turned into English is always a woeful spectacle—the pale, smileless corpse of what was once rare and radiant; but it is a thousand times better to read Sainte-Beuve or any other good foreign author in English than not to read him at all. Everybody has not time to emulate the poet Rowe, who learned Spanish in order to qualify himself, as he fondly thought, for a snug berth at Madrid, only to be told by his scholarly patron that now he could read "Don Quixote" in the original.

We hope these two volumes may be widely read as they deserve to be, and that they may set their readers thinking what it is that makes Sainte-Beuve so famous a critic and so delightful a writer. His volumes are very numerous. "All Balzac's novels occupy a shelf," says Browning's Bishop; Sainte-Beuve's criticisms take up quite as much room. The "Causeries du Lundi" and the "Nouveaux Lundis" fill some twenty-eight tomes. *A priori*, one would be disposed to mutter, "There is boredom here." Can any man turned forty truthfully declare that he wishes De Quincey had left thirty volumes behind him instead of fifteen? Great is De Quincey, but so elaborate are his movements, so tremendous his literary contortions, that when you have done with him you feel it would be cruelty to keep him stretched upon the rack of his own style for a moment longer. Sainte-Beuve is as easy as an old shoe. Never before or since has there been an author so well content with his subject, whatever it might chance to be; so willing to be bound within its confines, and not to travel beyond it. In this excellent "stay-at-home" quality, he reminds the English reader more of Addison than of any of our later critics and essayists. These latter are too anxious to please, far too disposed to believe that, apart from themselves and their flashing wits, their readers can have no possible interest in the subject they have in hand. They are ever seeking to adorn their theme instead of exploring it. They are always prancing, seldom willing to take a brisk constitutional along an honest turnpike road. Even so admirable, so sensible a writer as Mr. Lowell is apt to worry us with his Elizabethan profusion of imagery, epithet, and wit. "Something too much of this," we cry out before we are half-way through. William Hazlitt, again, is really too witty. It is uncanny. Sainte-Beuve never teases his readers this way. You often catch yourself wondering why it is you are interested, so matter-of-fact is his narrative. The dates of the births and deaths of his authors, the facts as to their parentage and

education, are placed before you with stern simplicity, and without a single one of those quips and cranks which Carlyle ("God rest his soul!—he was a merry man") scattered with full hands over his explosive pages. But yet if you are interested, as for the most part you are, what a triumph for sobriety and good sense! A noisy author is as bad as a bagpipe, a quiet one is as refreshing as a long pause in a foolish sermon.

Sainte-Beuve covered an enormous range in his criticism; he took the Whole as his province. It is an amusing trait of many living authors whose odd craze it is to take themselves and what they are fond of calling their "work"—by which, if you please, they mean their rhymes and stories—very seriously indeed, to believe that critics exist for the purpose of calling attention to them—these living solemnities—and pointing out their varied excellences, or promise of excellence, to an eager book-buying public. To detect in some infant's squall the rich futurity of a George Eliot, to predict a glorious career for Gus Hoskins—this it is to be a true critic. For our part, we think a critic better occupied, though he be destitute of the genius of Lamb or Coleridge, in calling attention to the real greatnesses or shortcomings of dead authors than in dictating to his neighbours what they ought to think about living ones. If you teach me or help me to think aright about Milton, you can leave me to deal with "The Light of Asia" on my own account. Addison was better employed expounding the beauties of "Paradise Lost" to an unappreciative age than when he was puffing Philips and belittling Pope, or even than he would have been had he puffed Pope and belittled Philips.

Sainte-Beuve was certainly happier snuffing the "parfums du passé" than when ranging amongst the celebrities of his own day. His admiration for Victor Hugo, which so notoriously grew cool, is supposed to have been by no means remotely connected with an admiration for Victor Hugo's wife. These things cannot be helped, but if you confine yourself to the past they cannot happen.

The method pursued by this distinguished critic during the years he was producing his weekly *Causerie*, was to shut himself up alone with his selected author—that is, with his author's writings, letters, and cognate works—for five days in the week. This was his period of immersion, of saturation. On the sixth day he wrote his criticism. On the seventh he did no manner of work. The following day the *Causerie* appeared, and its author shut himself up again with another set of books to produce another criticism. This was a workmanlike method. Sainte-Beuve had a genuine zeal to be a good workman in his own trade—the true instinct of the craftsman, always honoured in France, not so honoured as it deserves to be in England.

Sainte-Beuve's most careless reader cannot fail to observe his contentment with his subject, his restraint, and his good sense—all workmanlike qualities; but a more careful study of his writings fully warrants his title to the possession of other qualities it would be rash to rank higher, but which, here in England, we are accustomed to reward with more lavish praise—namely, insight, sympathy, and feeling.

To begin with, he was endlessly curious about people, without being in the least bit a gossip or a tattler. His interest never fails him, yet never leads him astray. His skill in collecting the salient facts and in emphasising the important ones, is marvellous. How unerring was his instinct in these matters the English reader is best able to judge by his handling

of English authors, so diverse and so difficult as Cowper, Gibbon, and Chesterfield. He never so much as stumbles. He understands Olney as well as Lausanne, Lady Austen and Mrs. Unwin as well as Madame Neckar or the Hampshire Militia. One feels sure that he could have written a better paper on John Bunyan than Macaulay did, a wiser on John Wesley than anybody has ever done.

Next to his curiosity must be ranked his sympathy, a sympathy all the more contagious because so quietly expressed, and never purporting to be based on intellectual accord. He handles mankind tenderly though firmly. His interest in them is not merely scientific—his methods are scientific, but his heart is human. Read his three papers on Cowper over again, and you will agree with me. How thoroughly he appreciates the charm of Cowper's happy hours—his pleasant humour—his scholarlike fancies—his witty verse. No clumsy jesting about old women and balls of worsted. It is the mixture of insight with sympathy that is so peculiarly delightful.

Sainte-Beuve's feeling is displayed doubtless in many ways, but to me it is always most apparent when he is upholding modesty and grace and wisdom against their loud-mouthed opposites. When he is doing this, his words seem to quiver with emotion—the critic almost becomes the preacher. I gladly take an example from one of the volumes already referred to. It occurs at the close of a paper on Camille Desmoulins, of whom Sainte-Beuve does his best to speak kindly, but the reaction comes—powerful, overwhelming, sweeping all before it.

"What a longing we feel after reading these pages, encrusted with mire and blood—pages which are the living image of the disorder in the souls and morals of those times. What a need we experience of taking up some wise book, where common-sense predominates, and in which the good language is but the reflection of a delicate and honest soul, reared in habits of honour and virtue. We exclaim: 'Oh! for the style of honest men—of men who have revered everything worthy of respect; whose innate feelings have ever been governed by the principles of good taste! Oh! for the polished, pure, and moderate writers! Oh! for Nicole's Essays, for D'Aguesseau writing the Life of his Father. Oh! Vauvenargues! Oh! Pellisson'"

I have quoted from one volume; let me now quote from the other. I will take a passage from the paper on Madame de Souza:—"In stirring times, in moments of incoherent and confused imagination like the present, it is natural to make for the most important point, to busy one's self with the general working, and everywhere, even in literature, to strike boldly, aim high, and shout through trumpets and speaking-tubes. The modest graces will perhaps come back after a while, and come with an expression appropriate to their new surroundings. I would fain believe it; but while hoping for the best, I feel sure that it will not be to-morrow that their sentiments and their speech will once more prevail."

But I must conclude with a sentence from Sainte-Beuve's own pen. Of Joubert he says: "Il a une manière qui fait qu'il ne dit rien, absolument rien comme un autre. Cela est sensible dans les lettres qu'il écrit, et ne laisse pas de fatiguer à la longue." Of such a judgment, one can only scribble in the margin, "How true!" Sainte-Beuve was always willing to write like another man. Joubert was not. And yet, strange paradox, there will be always more men able to write in the strained style of Joubert than in the natural style of Sainte-Beuve. It is

easier to be odd, intense, over-wise, enigmatic, than to be sensible, simple, and to see the plain truth about things. A. B.

REVIEWS.

MR. LECKY'S HISTORY.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. Vols. VII. and VIII. London: Longmans & Co.

MR. LECKY has had an almost unexampled piece of good fortune—he has been helping to make history while writing it. The volumes which complete his great work appeared at a crisis in the affairs of Ireland comparable only to the Union; and the ultimate result of the struggle is likely to be more affected by this careful and dispassionate narrative than by a multitude of partisan speeches and ephemeral articles. It is only thirteen years since the first of these volumes saw the light. To have described, with the minuteness and amplitude shown therein, the life of the Empire for a whole century is a feat rarely surpassed. Had Macaulay lived to carry down his history to the times of which Mr. Lecky writes, he would have penned more brilliant pages, and a narrative more flowing and more skilfully arranged. His work would have been marked by a better sense of proportion, and been enriched with more striking portraits of the actors; we could not have had more diligence and patience, research deeper or more indefatigable, and a more equitable spirit. Of a multitude of transactions Mr. Lecky has been the first to find the key. In the Irish State papers and other materials little known he has found the solution of problems which baffled his predecessors. The last three volumes, in which Ireland occupies a chief place, are illuminated by many side-lights derived from historical treasures in the Birmingham Tower at Dublin Castle. These, excellently arranged by Sir Bernard Burke, are sixty-eight boxes or *cartons* full of documents of a marvellously varied character—the very pith and marrow of history. The present writer can testify to the truth of Mr. Lecky's description of their value; Mr. Lecky does not overrate their importance and variety.

"Occasionally, too," he observes, "amid the great mass of serious, formal, and depressing documents there may be found others of a very different character, which were seized among the papers of the conspirators, and which have sometimes a strangely pathetic interest. There are love-letters and rude poems; passionate expressions of youthful friendship; note-books in which eager scholars described their studies or recorded their passing thoughts; day-dreams of young and ardent natures, too often destined to end in exile or the gallows."

In the earlier volumes Irish affairs were prominent; in the last two they exclude all other themes. The best excuse for this disproportion is the profound interest of the period which Mr. Lecky traverses, and the novelty of much of his narrative. For the first time we have a narrative with any pretension to impartiality of events hitherto told solely by bitter and furious partisans, whose animosity, not sadly incongruous with the duty of the listener, but too truly harmonised with the sanguinary scenes they described. On the story of misery, bloodshed, crime, perfidy often so triumphant, and courage and patriotism apparently baffled and futile, personal ambition and divided counsels wrecking noble causes, Mr. Lecky has not said the last word. Pervaded though his narrative is by a genuine desire to be impartial, he looks too coldly, and almost with unfriendly eye, on some aspects of an unfortunate country which merited at least commiseration. He does not, we will venture to say, always see the deeper meaning of the turmoil of evil passions, and he explains on too facile a theory the chronic elements of discontent. "There is a method of dealing with historical facts which has been happily compared to that of a child with his box of letters, who picks out and arranges those letters,

and those only, which spell the words on which he has previously determined, leaving all others untouched." Mr. Lecky is no time-serving pamphleteer and party garbler, and he is far above such arts. He has a lofty sense of his vocation, and he never fails, when he gives his opinion upon a debated point, to produce the evidence against his conclusion. Yet we complain, and we believe justly, of a lack of sympathy, a disposition to cheapen certain sides of Irish history, an inconsiderate pessimism alternating with immoderate optimism. Miserable has been the recurrence of folly, extravagance, and passion; should there not be a recognition of the noble impulses which drive men into enterprises destined to end in failure and crime? *Vae victis* must be the law of the world; but we look to the historian to pronounce a more equitable decree. It is not the highest justice to describe the failure of revolutionists without fully realising their ideal aims. These are grave faults; it is only an extenuating circumstance that Mr. Lecky never withholds the means of correcting them.

The seventh volume takes up the narrative at 1793—a time of alarm and unrest, verging on turmoil, wholly different from the period preceding the American War, when it was possible to withdraw from Ireland all the British troops except five thousand men. "Defenderism," at first a secret league of Roman Catholic peasants, was becoming a permanent organisation aiming at the abolition of titles, the redress of agrarian grievances, and other objects more vague and, as it turned out, more formidable. The United Irishmen, who were armed political conspirators, were becoming more active and aggressive. The marvellous events occurring in France were proving infectious. To that land Irish eyes eagerly turned as they now do to America. To every hamlet and cabin penetrated rumours of the mighty revolution in progress and of the future opening up to the poor and oppressed. Despairing of succeeding in Parliament, men of the stamp of Parson Jackson, Tone, Row, and Reynolds were making overtures to France for armed assistance. A succession of ill-fated expeditions was about to begin. Lord Fitzwilliam was about to proceed on his message of peace to Ireland—a message stultified by jealousy, religious rancour, the wounded pride of Beresford, and the weakness of Pitt. The eighth volume brings the narrative down to the Union. In the intervening space falls a series of dismal, sickening events—murders, rapine, every evil passion let loose, folly and infatuation triumphant; a chaos of insensate violence, as meaningless as the sanguinary forays of the New Zealanders. Through this painful story we are conducted deliberately and methodically; no horror is spared us. No picture in history is darker. Let those who, looking at the divisions of those times, are tempted to despair of Ireland, say whether she has not improved since 1793.

Mr. Lecky has experienced the difficulty of his predecessors, all of whom have been unable to find any thread connecting events apparently so meaningless. Three or four subjects, however, stand out from a mass of details of mankind in the world's history: Lord Fitzwilliam's mission, the unsuccessful French invasions, and the Union. No one has told so fully and clearly as Mr. Lecky the history of the Fitzwilliam episode. All that he says is to the discredit of Pitt. A great opportunity for healing ancient wounds presented itself. The Catholics were hopeful. Pitt had large ideas, but he had no definite policy for which he was ready to make a stand. He was reluctant to sacrifice Fitzwilliam, who saw that, if the representative system were improved, the chances of carrying the Union would, as Mr. Lecky says, "have been enormously diminished." But he did not choose to face the clamour of a powerful clique and all the angry Beresfords, whose removal was to be the first step in any measure of reform. Fitzwilliam's plan was bold and simple; it involved a complete repeal of all disqualifying

laws. "I propose that no reserve should be made, not even of the highest officer of State, not even the Seals, nor the Bench. To make the reserve would be to leave a bone of contention. It would be leaving a splinter in the wound, that would to a certainty, sooner or later, break out again." Admirable sentiment even in these days, as we have lately seen, but imperfectly understood, and in 1794 far in advance of the sentiment of the times. To an Irish clique, a phalanx of hereditary jobbers, Lord Fitzwilliam was sacrificed, to the eternal discredit of Pitt and to the lasting injury of Ireland, a wise and hopeful effort to abolish discontent miscarried; and from that time a spirit of sullen and virulent disloyalty crept over the land. "The recall of Fitzwilliam may be partly recognised as the turning-point in Irish history."

Mr. Lecky's account of the French invasion is, and must be, scrappy and disconnected; but it is better than any other, and it leaves a profound impression of the narrow escape which twice at least we made of losing Ireland. A little less wind and the island would have been lost, at least for a time. Had the Dutch expedition which was prepared at the Texel been only pushed on, as Wolfe Tone prayed earnestly, when the British fleet was in a state of mutiny, there was nothing to oppose it. Fortunately for us the Dutch admiral was over-cautious; the mutiny was quelled, and the crushing defeat of the Dutch at Camperdown put an end to the most formidable scheme prepared against England since the Armada. Humbert's landing in Killala was a much less serious affair. From the outset it was doomed to failure.

In Mr. Lecky's pages we see how in the past as now the chief enemies of Ireland have so often been among her own sons. At every period of Irish affairs, you have the inevitable informer, who sells his friends in the dearest market; the hot-headed patriot, whose paramount virtue is vanity; or the popular leader, who is ready to sacrifice the interests of his country to gratify his pride. In this volume we have a picture of Leonard McNally, whose name figures in the reports of the trials of many Irish patriots as their professional defender. It is now demonstrated that while he was acting as counsel for them—even while Curran was eulogising his "uncompromising and romantic friendship"—he was in daily communication with the Government, was its confidential adviser, and was the recipient of a stipend paid in consideration of divulging the secrets confided in him by friends and clients. In the miserable past both Pigott and Parnell have their representatives.

Grattan is Mr. Lecky's ideal of an Irish statesman, and the ideal is a noble one. What might not have become possible, how much brighter might have been the picture presented of Ireland to-day, had his counsels prevailed! He, as we all know, was strongly opposed to the Union, a measure which Mr. Lecky thinks had become inevitable. Not Castlereagh, in his view, but Pitt was the evil genius of Ireland; and Professor Goldwin Smith's plea for extenuating circumstances in favour of the latter does not much weaken the force of Mr. Lecky's indictment.

"The reader who considers all this may justly conclude that the continual disaffection of Ireland was much less due to the Union, or to the means by which the Union was carried, than to the shipwreck of the great measures of reconciliation which ought to have accompanied it, and which were intended to be its immediate consequence. The policy which Pitt proposed to himself was a noble and a comprehensive though a sufficiently obvious one; but when the time came to carry it into execution, he appears to me to have shown himself lamentably deficient both in sagacity and in the determination of a great statesman. Nor is it, I think, possible to acquit him of grave moral blame. However culpable was the manner in which he forced through the Union, there can at least be no reasonable doubt that his motives were then purely patriotic; that he sought only what he believed to be the vital interest of the Empire, and not any personal or private object. There was here no question of winning votes, or turning a minority into a majority, or consolidating a party, or maintaining an individual ascendancy. It is difficult to believe that the alloy of personal ambition was equally absent when he cast aside so lightly the three great Catholic measures on which the peace of Ireland and the success of the Union mainly depended."

In blaming Pitt we would not excuse Castlereagh and all concerned in the Union. If the Union was inevitable, it might have been accompanied by generous concessions. Contemplating what well might have been, History records her eternal regret. Once again the gates seemed opened to a nation's hopes, and then, by cowardice, folly, and blindness, were shut, as it seemed, for ever. Is it possible that a similar mistake is again committed? Can it be that those who see clearly the errors of Pitt repeat them in other circumstances? Can those who write history so well miss its plainest lessons?

MAHAFFY'S "GREEK WORLD UNDER ROMAN SWAY."

THE GREEK WORLD UNDER ROMAN SWAY, FROM POLYBIUS TO PLUTARCH. By J. P. Mahaffy. London: Macmillan & Co. 1890.

MR. MAHAFFY has, we hope, chosen his vocation, and it is a good and useful one. Nothing is more needed than to persuade people that the history and life of the Greek nation did not come to an end either when Tissaphernès made his sacrifice to Artemis or when Philip won the battle of Chaironeia, or even when Corinth was sacked and burned by Mummius. It seems to be the fixed conviction of many who fancy that they know something of Greek history and Greek literature, of some even who are set to teach Greek history and Greek literature, that everything of the kind came to an end at a very early date, at some of the dates of which we have given often three to choose from. The delusion takes many shapes; the queerest of all perhaps is that when Plutarch or Diodōros record anything that is not in Thucydides, they invented it out of their own heads. Just fancy dull, honest old Diodōros either clever enough or wicked enough to invent anything! But all its shapes maybe rhaps be brought under one familiar formula, "What I know not is not knowledge"—a principle acted on by many who have not even the excuse of being "master of a college." To such, we were going to say, Mr. Mahaffy may be of great use; but to them, we fear, neither Mr. Mahaffy nor anyone else will ever be of any use. He may however be of great use in keeping others from ever becoming like them. Mr. Mahaffy himself had his wild oats to sow; but by this time he has pretty well sown them. He would not now think it funny to get to *Φάληρον*, and to find that nobody there called it *Φαλήρον*. We feel sure that by this time he does not mix up the taking of Constantinople in 1204 with the taking of Athens in 1687. We have hopes that he would no longer think it wrong to fire on the Athenian akropolis when it was held by the Turks, lest haply some statue should lose its nose in the cannonade. It is on this last point that we do not feel quite sure. Mr. Mahaffy has come to know a great many things which he did not know then, and to be a very useful assertor of them. But of political thought in any age he remains wholly incapable. He has all Mommsen's strange hatred for the man who defends the rights of a small State against a great one. But he does what Mommsen does not do; when anybody displeases him, he calls them Home-Rulers. That is the wickedest name he knows, and so he gives it to the men who stood up for the freedom of their own land against Rome. In Mr. Mahaffy's last book Philopoimen was the type of a wicked Home-Ruler. In the present book, there is no room for anything of the kind; it would be hard to find anybody to call Home-Rulers between Polybius and Plutarch. He can only fill up the gap by a bit of Latin addressed to Mr. Balfour, in which he talks of "improbi conviciis, stulti consiliis, adversarii insidiis." We should have thought that "insidiæ" was a worse form of warfare than "consilia" or even "convicia"; but seemingly—it will be a comfort then to some—Mr. Balfour's "adversarii" do not come under the head either of "improbi" or of

"stulti." Through all this we can live; we only hope that Mr. Mahaffy may some day get to the days of Miaoulès and Kanarès, of Rhégas and the elder Triokoupès. We should certainly not object to any of those being called Home Rulers. Only by that time we hope Mr. Mahaffy will have learned to appreciate them too well to give them what in his eyes is so ugly a name.

We have referred to some of Mr. Mahaffy's older vagaries by way both of warning and of encouragement. We feel sure that, when Mr. Mahaffy knew least, he never said that what he knew not was not knowledge. And that is the reason why he has come to know so much more, and to be able to open a wide field of knowledge which is specially despised by the votaries of that formula. Even to those votaries, Mr. Mahaffy, no doubt as he learns more himself, is getting a little more merciful. There is still a gibe at "dons" now and then, but nothing like some of those earlier outbursts, which might almost drive us over to the side of the dons. Politics are not Mr. Mahaffy's strong point. One who was strong in that line might have made a great deal more than Mr. Mahaffy has made of the endless varieties of political relation between Rome and her dependent Hellenic and Hellenistic allies. But it is better that Mr. Mahaffy should stick to the facts to which he can do justice; and even in the political department there is some advance. When Aristion defends Athens against Sulla—has anybody but Mr. Mahaffy written him Sylla for the last fifty years?—he might in some sort be said to be defending a small state against a great one. But the ally of Mithridatès was so plainly not a Home-Ruler that even Mr. Mahaffy does not call him one. Mr. Mahaffy might, it strikes us, have made a good deal more than he has done out of the political treatises both of Plutarch and of Diôn Chrysostom. Others have called attention to the singular state of things which they reveal to us. We see cities, all of which keep some of the attributes of separate commonwealths, some of which in theory keep all the powers of independent commonwealths, but which are practically afraid to use them. Yet they have not lost the character of free cities; an assembly which has been a sovereign Parliament may practically have less power than a town council; but it does not forget that it has been a sovereign Parliament. This is the state of things for which Plutarch writes his treatises of good advice, and most instructive treatises they are. Mr. Mahaffy has worked at them, but not with the same life and success with which he works at other parts of his subject. He tells us that the Greek *πόλις* is best rendered by the "old-fashioned word" *polity*. This he defines to be "that sort of community which is a single city and yet counts as a separate state"—a position at which Mr. Mahaffy, after so much Greek study, seems still a little surprised. He then goes on to tell us that of this state of things "Monaco, San Marino, and Hamburg are or were up to our own generation the only modern examples." The date is perhaps meant to shut out those German and Italian commonwealths which perished in the confusions in which the eighteenth century ended and the nineteenth began. But does Mr. Mahaffy fancy that Monaco, with its prince, is a free city? And why only Hamburg of the Hanseatic three? Lübeck and Bremen are just as much and just as little free as their greater but less dignified sister. William the First, when he took the Imperial crown, was careful to mention the assent of the free cities of Germany as well as that of the princes. But Mr. Mahaffy is not lucky in politics or in politics either.

Still Mr. Mahaffy has done so much really good work with Plutarch, with Diôn, and with other writers whom it is thought fine to know nothing about, that we will not quarrel with him because he has his own line, and does best when he sticks to that line. Cicero of course Mr. Mahaffy girds at according to the new fashion, and we cannot

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deny that the revered Tully of our forefathers did lay himself open to some spiteful remarks. But we can profit all the same by what Mr. Mahaffy says about Cicero's relation to Greek teaching. Brutus comes off very badly in Mr. Mahaffy's hands, and there is no denying that in Mr. Mahaffy's part of the world Brutus did show a side of him which was far from praiseworthy. To poor Cato he holds out a little contemptuous pity. Still there is a good deal to be picked up in Mr. Mahaffy's treatment of these times. He is at his best with Herod and Cleopatra; he understands them; no one could call Cleopatra a Home-Ruler, and it would be a stretch of language to apply the name to Herod. And we note a good point in our author's treatment of Sulla himself. He remarks how the Romans in Asia, Sulla chief of them, picked up various superstitions which, as he says, "would have been ridiculed by the circle of Scipio or by the rational school of Cicero and Caesar, who learned from the philosophers of Athens and of Rhodes."

Mr. Mahaffy knows his subject well enough not to mock at inscriptions, as the manner of some still is who profess and call themselves scholars. He grasps the simple truth that an inscription is a document—a document written on stone instead of on paper or parchment—and that for a great many purposes a document is the best evidence that can be had. Among the most curious are the Greek translations, very bad translations, of Latin decrees of the Roman Senate, sent out for the benefit of provincials and allies. But documents are in their own nature formal, and have a tendency to be dead. It is to the writers of the time that we must go to put life into the skeleton. And Mr. Mahaffy has worked well at all the writers of the time. Dén he follows into an almost forgotten corner of the Greek world, the cities north of the Euxine. There, he remarks, we have Hellenic life still abiding, as distinguished from the Hellenistic life of Asia and Alexandria. We wish Mr. Mahaffy health and strength to give us pictures of this outlying Greek life in centuries which he has not as yet touched; he is still very far from the end of the commonwealth of Cherson.

Mr. Mahaffy goes very carefully through the miscellaneous writings of Plutarch, those generally brought together under the name of *Moralia*. He carefully distinguishes between the witness of Dión to the comparatively flourishing Greek cities of Asia, touched with a certain scorn for the decayed state of Old Greece, and the witness of Plutarch, who spent the most part of his life in the decayed land. Mr. Mahaffy will have some day to go on to days when Greece itself to some extent rose up again from that decay, a decay, be it remembered, which cannot be wholly charged on the Roman administration, as Polybios records and comments on its beginnings. He sees no true witness to the state and manners of Old Greece in that day in the well-known story which appears in two shapes, the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, and the *Ass* attributed to Lucian. Both these wild tales Mr. Mahaffy holds to be borrowed from an earlier writer, Lucius of Patrai, whose existence is proved by a reference to Phôtios. In his eyes the stories are purely fabulous, and do not represent even a real state of manners. Good scholars have thought otherwise; but Mr. Mahaffy makes out a case, and the point is worth arguing out on both sides.

Out of Plutarch indeed Mr. Mahaffy contrives to put together a full and clear picture of life in Greece as it was in his day. It was not a stirring life certainly, nor a life which set any very high standard before it; but it was clearly a life in which a quiet, moderate man like Plutarch, who chiefly loved his books, his pen, and his friends, could get on fairly well. Mr. Mahaffy brings out various points in the religion, the morals, the manners, and the literature of the time. On the whole, he sees signs that things were slightly mending. The position of women was rising; the thought of a better treatment of slaves was coming in. This brings us to

another point. There can be no doubt that this improvement, however slight and slow, had something to do with the later reception of Christianity. But that is a subject on which there is as yet nothing to say, at any rate not in Plutarch's land. Tacitus and Pliny record the existence of Christianity in Rome and in Asia, and Pliny witnesses to its great spread in Asia. But, as a rule, the new creed seems simply unknown to the writers of the time; it is not even, as it is with the Emperor Marcus, a sect to be spoken against. When Mr. Mahaffy gets on somewhat further, he will come across the fact that Old Greece long remained one of the most purely pagan parts of the Empire. He now notices, in his characteristic way, that if Plutarch had been at Athens when St. Paul discoursed there, he would have been one of those who were for giving him another hearing.

Mr. Mahaffy goes carefully through the whole Greek world at the time which he has undertaken to illustrate. That leads him to Italy, Massalia, and Kyrênê. He often falls foul of Strabo, distinguishing, as he holds, between the places which the geographer really describes from his own knowledge and those where he simply copies from other writers. This inquiry leads Mr. Mahaffy into Sicily, where one would have thought that he might have found more to say. He notices that decay was already beginning, the decay which caused Syracuse and Agrigentum to shrink up into what they are now. But he does not enlarge as one might have expected on the special relation of the island to his main subject. Sicily was the most complete case of *Hellenismos* anywhere, and that wrought without the help of Macedonian conquest. It was not Pyrrhos, but the slow working of ages before Pyrrhos, which had made the whole Sikeli people so thoroughly Greek that, in Cicero's day—in fact long before—no distinction remained to be observed between the Sikeli and the Sikeliot.

SIR F. POLLOCK'S COLLECTED DISCOURSES.

OXFORD LECTURES, AND OTHER DISCOURSES. By Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Oxford. London: Macmillan & Co. 1890.

ANY book bearing Sir F. Pollock's name comes with a presumption in its favour, for none of our contemporary writers is the master of a wider range of interests and attainments, or of a more graceful and pleasing style. The present volume is in both these respects equal to its predecessors; it is brightly and vigorously written, and it is rich with that sort of easy variety of illustration which flows forth from a mind which the action of a lively curiosity has stored with matter of many kinds. The only defect we have to note is that the discourses here brought together are too miscellaneous in character. About one-half of them belong to the province of jurisprudence, and have, therefore, a legitimate cohesion with one another. Two others—the "Dialogue on Religious Equality" and a paper entitled "Home Rule and Imperial Sovereignty"—are political, and have really nothing to do with discussions on the philosophy and history of law. Another, on "Examinations and Education," is educational, or, at any rate, not legal; and the two which remain—an article on "The Library of the Alpine Club," and an article on "The Forms and History of the Sword," have still less claim to find a place in a volume whose primary appeal is to legal students. It would have been better to have reserved these essays for a collection distinctly addressed to the general rather than to the legal reader; and, similarly, to have kept back the legal essays for a year or two longer, till the author had by additional lectures and writings on subjects connected with his professional or professorial accumulated matter enough for a volume equal in size to the present. It may also be doubted whether two of the articles here reprinted are not rather too slight

to be worthy of appearing beside the more solid and permanent contents of the book. The "Dialogue on Religious Equality" was a good magazine article in the *Fortnightly Review*, and that on "Examinations and Education" contains some reflections not inappropriate to the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*. But when such large and difficult topics as these are treated of in a book by a distinguished writer, we expect something of a quite different order from that which is good enough for the hasty readers of a magazine. So long as there are left a few persons who take refuge in books, as in mountains whose tops have not yet been submerged by the rising flood of magazines and newspapers, such persons deserve to receive that encouragement which eminent writers may give, by showing that they recognise the distinction between the literature which is glanced through in a club smoking-room and that which takes its duly won place upon the shelves of a working library.

Subject to these observations, as the lawyers are wont to say, we have nothing but commendation for the contents of Sir F. Pollock's book. Sometimes, as in the case of his article on "The Library of the Alpine Club," he tantalises us by merely skimming with light wings the surface of a subject on which we feel that he could say much that would be worth remembering. Sometimes he starts an interesting question, and says just enough to show its difficulties without pursuing it so far as to give his own solution. But two praises may be awarded to him all through. His substance is never weak and his manner is never dull. The most finished piece in the book is, to our thinking, the *éloge* on Sir Henry Maine. We use the French word advisedly, because the article itself belongs to a French rather than to an English type. It does not profess to be a complete estimate of that distinguished man's literary gifts or of his work, whether professional or administrative. It omits to notice, or very softly touches, certain deficiencies in his method of which so acute a critic as our present author cannot have been ignorant. But it dwells upon his merits and services with an appreciation which is so discriminating, and expressed in language so choice and delicate, that the warmth of the tribute seems in no way excessive. Sir F. Pollock is a real master of the ornate style of writing. In his hands it never becomes tawdry; and if it is sometimes a little quaint, this gives a pleasant touch of freshness, a singularity which does not degenerate into oddity.

It is not easy to give any general account of a book whose contents are so various; but we may say that, besides the really beautiful tribute to Sir H. Maine, the most interesting articles seem to us to be those on "The King's Peace" and on "The Sword." They have, however diverse their topics, a certain similarity in their breadth of view and in the happy application of the historical method. Still more remarkable, although perhaps almost too discursive, is the lecture on "English Opportunities in Historical and Comparative Jurisprudence." Its theme is the peculiarly favourable position in which English lawyers stand for investigating the history and the nature of legal and political institutions, owing to the diversity of legal systems within our own isles; to the still greater diversity of laws, customs, and institutions, social and economic as well as legal, within the British dominions; and to the fact that both the common law of England and the political habits and notions of Englishmen have struck roots in many new soils, where they are springing up and bearing fruit which well deserves to be compared with that of the parent stock. The lecturer remarks, with great force, that if it had not been for the insular position of England, and consequent peculiar development of English legal rules and usages, there would have been no independent modern civilised system to set beside that which on the continent of Europe has grown up out of the Roman law. And he dwells with equal truth on the unrivalled facilities for the study of

primitive institutions which the vast and varied area of our Eastern Empire, including not only India, but the Indo-Chinese regions, with sundry groups of islands, presents. These facilities have been largely, but by no means sufficiently, employed; and they are daily decreasing in number and in value as the progress of what is called civilisation encroaches on the domain of archaic custom. It is much to be desired that some more ample and regular provision than now exists were made for gathering and recording facts many of which will else be forgotten, or whose explanation may be lost for ever. This remark, though incidental to the argument we are dealing with, is not foreign to the view which our author takes of the present functions of juristic study. He perceives that *à priori* discussions, whether speculations on natural law such as still employ some minds in Germany and Italy, or the barren dogmatisings of Austin and his school, are not the present business of jurisprudence, which is called upon to deal with a large mass of data as yet imperfectly explored and digested, and to construct what may be called a philosophical history of law. Few writers equally interested in legal antiquities have as strong a sense of the conditions of the present as Sir F. Pollock. Such a sense is no doubt the fruit which historical study, rightly pursued, ought to bear. But it is a fruit for which we have often to search in vain in the works of historians.

A LIFE OF GOUNOD.

CHARLES GOUNOD: HIS LIFE AND WORKS. By Marie Ann de Bovet. London: Sampson Low & Co.

THERE is a little too much disquisition in Madame de Bovet's *Life of Gounod*. But, apart from her distinctions between the subjective and the objective in music, and her inquiries as to the meaning and origin of genius, her book possesses value; and it is written in a lively and agreeable style. There is nothing on the title-page, and little enough in the matter of the volume, to show that it is translated from the French. But when one of the most famous of Bach's works is spoken of (p. 209) as *La Passion selon St. Mathieu*, it becomes evident either that this *Life of Gounod* must have been originally written in the French language, or that its author, writing in English, imagines that Bach composed his *Matthew Passion* Music to a French book of words.

A belief has somehow got abroad that Gounod in his youthful days proposed to take orders, and that with this view he passed some years in a seminary. Of this no mention is to be found in Madame de Bovet's work; and the composer's time is so well accounted for, from his youth upwards, that one can only conclude the story of his having been a seminarist to be deduced from the probability that a man of so religious a temperament might at one time have resolved to enter religion. His first compositions, however, when after studying at the Conservatoire of Paris he went as first prizeman to continue his musical studies at Rome, were for the Church; and it was by a Mass that he first became known both in Paris and in London. His first opera, *Sappho* by name, was also produced in Paris, and immediately afterwards in London. But, unlike his beautiful Mass, Gounod's first attempt at dramatic music fell flat in both capitals. For this result the librettist was in a great measure to blame; and the same may in a less degree be said in regard to the non-success of Gounod's *Bleeding Nun*, which contains, nevertheless, one or two strikingly dramatic scenes. Managers, especially in England, had now lost faith in Gounod; and although many delightful orchestral pieces and songs (such as the "Funeral March of a Marionette" and the "Ave Maria") found their way into our concert-rooms, where they at once made their mark, Gounod did not show himself at his best and greatest until, in 1859, he produced *Faust*. He was then in his fortieth year, and

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before he was forty-five *Faust* had been translated into Italian, German, and English, and played with unbounded success in all the capitals and chief artistic cities of Europe. Probably no story has attracted the attention of composers so much as that of "Faust"; though Goethe himself had never regarded the subject as susceptible of musical or even dramatic treatment. When Prince Puckler-Muskau told the old poet, not many years before his death, that he had seen his "Faust" represented on the stage at Berlin, with illustrative music by Prince Radziwill, Goethe replied that it "must have been very strange." Just about that time "Faust" was being submitted by the director of the French Opera House to Rossini as the basis of an opera for which Alexandre Dumas was to write the libretto; and when the negotiations in the matter fell through (from reasons wholly unconnected with the question of "Faust") a *Faust* opera was really composed by Mademoiselle Louise Bertin; though on production, owing to the feebleness of the young lady (who had little merit beyond that of being the daughter of the editor of the *Journal des Débats*), the work failed. When Meyerbeer, after the triumph of *Robert le Diable*, was asked to compose a *Faust* for the Grand Opera, he at once rejected the proposition on the valid artistic ground that the subject had already found its definitive form in Goethe's dramatic poem. Both Schumann and Berlioz wrote *Faust* cantatas; one taking a religious and mystical, the other a grotesque satirical view of the subject—which is, indeed, many-sided. Finally, a very skilful librettist, Monsieur Jules Barbier, who had already reduced Goethe's dramatic poem to the shape and style of a livelyactable play, prevailed upon Gounod to try his hand on a story which had tempted many composers, and frightened not a few. Gounod read the libretto, based scene by scene on the before-mentioned play, and saw that, besides being highly dramatic, it abounded in strong musical situations; and he then at once began what was destined to prove his masterpiece. All that Madame de Bovet has to say about the difficulties which both the composer and the librettist had to contend with while attending the rehearsals of their joint work is highly interesting. The manager of the Théâtre Lyrique, M. Carvalho, objected, after the manner of his kind, on every departure from stage convention; and he actually complained of the striking termination to the third Act, with the embrace of Faust and Marguerite at Marguerite's window and the sardonic chuckle of Mephistopheles in the background. He wished this most dramatic close to be replaced by an ordinary concerted finale.

Admirably treated from a scenic and spectacular point of view, M. Barbier's libretto must in particular have commended itself to Gounod by the opportunities it offered for love music and the music of the Church. The Church music was found to be somewhat voluptuous; the love music somewhat religious; and a French critic was in a measure justified when he described the whole as the work of a "sensual priest." It is, indeed, a fact that just as Rubinstein's love songs might pass for prayers, so inversely the prayers of Gounod might well be mistaken for passionate declarations of earthly affection. Who, hearing as a separate composition the beautiful melody in *Mors et Vita*, which is intended to suggest the happiness of the blessed, would not mistake it for a love romance?

Faust stands high above everything else that Gounod has produced; and next to it may well be ranked his two oratorios the *Redemption* and *Mors et Vita*, which, as Gounod's biographer states, on the authority of M. Gounod himself, have never met anywhere with such warm appreciation as in England. This the composer explains by the religious rather than by the musical character of the English people. We have "a more educated taste than the French as regards sacred music;" and this, he thinks, may be due to our loftier religious convictions. "When one sees Englishmen attentively follow the execution of

a score," says Gounod, as quoted by Madame de Bovet, " . . . one cannot help thinking that they are rather bent on being musicians than really so. They are actuated by British pride, because their artistic tastes must be superior to the tastes of other nations, just as their navy is more powerful, and their cotton and flannel of better quality."

Gounod is known to have always entertained a weakness, or at least a special affection, for his own *Romeo and Juliet*; and Madame Marie Roze once wrote to ask him which of the two he liked best, *Romeo and Juliet* or *Faust*. M. Gounod's mystic, paradoxical reply is worth citing. "*Faust*," he wrote, "is older, but I was younger; *Romeo* is younger, but I was older. Now, choose for yourself."

With commendable good taste M. Gounod's biographer passes over his lamentable adventures in London, which were to be followed by equally lamentable ones in Paris. All she tells us in connection therewith is that on returning to Paris Gounod had to begin writing afresh his score of *Polyeucte*. The original score had fallen into the hands of an English lady, who declined to give it up until she was forced to do so by the judgment of a French tribunal.

PITT AND THE JACOBINS.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF W. A. MILES ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (1789—1817). Edited by the Rev. C. P. Miles. Two vols. London: Longmans, 1890.

MACAULAY would have revelled in this book; and might have written an *Edinburgh* article on it, when such things were still done by Macaulays. It is almost all one long arraignment of Pitt by a candid enemy-friend whom he once took up.

The chief interest lies between 1789 and the war between England and France, which was at last declared by the National Convention on the 1st of February, 1793; and Miles's connection with that important historical episode came about in this way. Going abroad in 1782 to live near Liège for economy's sake, his "most friendly intercourse" with the Prince-bishop of that ancient place soon put him in possession of important pieces of political information which he sent to Lord Temple (Marquis of Buckingham, 1784), offering himself as a paid unaccredited agent, to "enter upon business directly," and be fixed at Liège. Buckingham passed him on to Pitt, to whom he was to write direct. Miles was then thirty-one; and Pitt, who had never been a boy and never young, was twenty-six and had been two years Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

At Liège Miles became mixed up with one Le Brun, editor of the *Journal Politique et Général de l'Europe*; to whom, for insufficient services rendered, Pitt then denied an allowance of £50 a year. At Liège too we hear of "ripening a revolt" against Austria (1787), and then of the actual rising, when Miles quitted the scene for Brussels; whence he was in 1789 sent to the court of the Elector of Mayence at Frankfort, then a forcing-house for intrigue, where every sovereign power, big and little, had its emissaries; and the frank rascality of those gentry was easily to be studied.

It is much to the credit of Miles's sagacity that he there adopted the idea, from which he never swerved, of freeing the Austrian Low-Countries and the province of Liège—of making an independent Belgium in fact—which has now long been an Anglo-European axiom.

Having been seven years abroad, he was sent personally by Pitt, with his own *viva voce* instructions, to Paris in July, 1790, to sound the leading revolutionaries—Lafayette, Mirabeau, Danton, and so on—as to a cancelling of the Bourbon "family compact" between France and Spain; Pitt having conceived the plan of utilising the bond of his French commercial treaty (1786) and the revolutionary effervescence combined, to separate those two countries.

Miles and Hugh Elliot (a diplomat of seventeen years' service) sent to Pitt from Paris at this time—each being ignorant of the other's employment—concurrent and valuable information. But Elliot wrote through our Embassy; Miles direct to Pitt as a mere secret emissary. Elliot was promoted to a post in South America, while Miles, although constant in his applications for a similar recognition, never got anything. In fact, he overdid his part in Paris; became a speaking member of the Jacobin Club of

"Near 2,000 persons—men, women, and children; of all ranks and of every climate; a piebald crew of nobles, plebeians, priests, beggars, thieves, and assassins;" who then swayed and governed France.

Miles now—not perceiving that events were moving far more swiftly than ideas—warmly and even angrily espoused the notion—first suggested to him (he long after said) in 1781 by the Marquis de Bouillé—of extending the commercial treaty to an actual alliance between England and France, which of course meant the prior recognition of the Revolution and the Republic. But we do not recognise—we barely have time to cognise—an earthquake in action; and alliance is impracticable with a tornado as it tears by. Miles however pursued this so pertinaciously that it became in his head the monitory *idée fixe*; and Pitt credited him (as Miles wrote down in 1792) with Jacobinical principles or prejudices; which was then a very awful accusation. It was about this time too, it would seem, that that notable common rogue, "the hapless object" as Miles called him, Latude (of the Bastille) successfully passed himself off upon Miles as Sterne's *La Fleur redivivus*.

Miles's letters were consequently unnoticed for months together; and he was made but "too well acquainted with the cold, ungracious, and insolent carriage of Lord Grenville, and the *hauteur* and reserve of Mr. Pitt." But for all that, in January, 1793, he boldly told Pitt: "Remember, sir, if you go to war with France you will ruin your country." Now at this very time the French irregular agents in London—Mourgue, Maret (later Duc de Bassano) and Noël (finally of Noël et Chapsal)—were barefacedly jockeying Miles both in London and Paris. For Le Brun, who was setting these agents on, had, by one of the many amazing trundles of the revolutionary hoop, been perched for a brief interval as Minister at the French Foreign Office, and he was then treacherously using his friend Miles to humiliate and make war on the Minister that had refused him his vails. Le Brun's congeners however cut off his head a few months later for "embroiling his country with all the Powers of Europe."

Miles, as we see, was at the same time accusing Pitt of going to war with France; but, as even unfriendly Macaulay wrote, "the impulse which drove the two nations to a collision was not to be arrested by the abilities or by the authority of any single man." And Roland's (or perhaps Madame Roland's) dictum was as true as any—"Peace is out of the question. We have three hundred thousand ruffians under arms. We must force them as far as legs will carry them, else will they come back and cut our throats." M. Taine, by the way (doubling Mr. Mulhall), now calculates that Napoleon's grand total of dead was eventually 1,700,000 bred and born Frenchmen, plus 2,000,000 of allies and enemies. And right or wrong, willing or driven, Pitt himself was killed by that war, the last two knockdown blows being Ulm and Austerlitz.

We get one lifelike flash (in a main dull book of details) when Miles, on Sunday, 13th January, 1793, took to Whitehall a very long and mightily stiff semi-official despatch from Maret—then Le Brun's chief clerk at the Paris Foreign Office—addressed to him (Miles). This letter contained the pretty passage:

"We are ready; our armies are on the spot; Liberty calls upon them; and it is in Holland we shall strike the first blow at England. It behoves you quickly to make your decision. . . . Adieu, my dear Miles!"

"The Cabinet was sitting when I arrived" (noted Miles the same day). "Mr. Pitt came out and received the *exposé* of Maret with great good humour [he hadn't then read it], and, of course, the marginal notes exactly as I had scribbled them. He took it into the Cabinet. In about an hour he came out furious; freighted with the whole bill of the Cabinet, aggravated by that of Mr. Burke—who, although not in the Ministry, attended on this occasion. Would to God he had been asleep in the bosom of Abraham! The Minister expressed his desire that I should no longer correspond with the French Executive Council on the subject of peace or war."

He continued however to send in occasional letters to Whitehall until Pitt, in January, 1794, finally forbade him to send him any more French intelligence (ii. 307); but even so the "irrepressible agent" (as Mr. C. P. Miles calls him) returned to the charge eleven months later. He had so strong a "list" towards the French Republican side that no amount of ballasting could correct it; and even six years after Pitt's death he was still, by the Ministries of 1812, considered to be "mad on peace," and so inadmissible for diplomatic employment. He continued to the end to be a disappointed applicant.

It is noteworthy that Miles detested Burke and also despised Mirabeau. All he wrote about either is too palpably not the utterance of the seer; and must be carried to the debit, the minus side of the legends of those all-too magnificent personages. At the same time he belauded the "cool, measured, and resolved; the stern, plain, unaffected; the above-corruption, cautious, wily" Robespierre, long before he emerged from the ruck of the heterogeneous Jacobin Club. And Miles's proposal and revision of the Alien Act of 1793 was aimed mainly at the *émigrés*, the aristos.

We can detect but one personal trait descriptive of the human nature of Miles. It is in a letter of Lord Moira's to Sir Home Popham: "his quickness, and even the eagerness of his manner." For the rest his mediocrity seems slow enough. And the sole gleam of brightness in the book is Madame de Flahaut's verdict on Fox (aged but 43, in 1792): "Il est vaste, il est grand, il est sale, et sans ornement—comme l'église de Saint-Paul!"

The introduction is a better than good piece of literary workmanship; but the total absence of any index, and the rarity of the year-dates in the Contents and the Introduction, are cruel to those who will have to use the volumes. There are naturally a good number of historically valuable letters, and some well-chosen notes; but a vice of tiresome self-repetition was sedulously cultivated by Miles through life; and this joined with an inflated style make the reading no pastime.

ABOUT LONDON.

MARYLEBONE AND ST. PANCRAS. By George Clinch. Illustrated. London: Truslove & Shirley.
LONDON PICTURES. By the Rev. Richard Lovett, M.A. London: Religious Tract Society.

A DETAILED history of the wide area occupied by the districts of Marylebone and St. Pancras, containing as they do rich and extensive materials for a book of the kind, would require not one, but many volumes. As Mr. Clinch did not want his book to rank as a mere example of laborious research, but to be read and enjoyed, he has very wisely not attempted anything in the nature of an exhaustive history. From the large mass of material at his disposal he has made a selection of such facts as he considers likely to be permanently acceptable.

The district we know as Marylebone bears in Domesday Book the name of Tyburn, having been so called from one of the three streams—Holburn and Westburn were the other two—which took their rise in the northern heights of London, and flowed southward into the Thames. About the beginning of the fifteenth century the name began to change to Mary-le-bourne, the Bishop of London having dedicated a church to St. Mary for the people of Tyburn, in room of the church of St. John the Baptist, which had fallen into a ruinous state from neglect.

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The chapter on the ecclesiastical history of Maryle-bourne, and that upon the Marylebone Gardens, a famous resort of the pleasure-seekers of last century, which occupied the ground now known as Beaumont Street, Devonshire Street, and Devonshire Place, are specially interesting; but the only possible method of giving the reader any idea of the great variety of subject necessarily entertained in a history of Marylebone is a selected list of names of places and people. The Regent's Park, St. John's Wood, Cavendish Square, Portman Square, Manchester Square, Dorset Square, Blandford Square, are all in Marylebone; and we must not omit to mention Tyburn, with its tree of "deadly never-green." Then there resided within the parish, at one time or other in the course of their lives, Joanna Southcott, Mrs. Siddons, Holcroft, Mary Lamb, Gibbon, Fuseli, Faraday, Wilkie, Dickens, Macready, Lady Hester Stanhope, Mrs. Browning, and many others notable in art and letters or in society.

Only the southern portion of St. Pancras has been included in this book, the great historical interest which centres in and immediately around the old church demanding too much space, even for popular treatment, to admit of any account of the northern portions. Although Mr. Clinch thus limits himself, we could supply from his chapters on St. Pancras as important a list of people and places as that from the account of Marylebone, were not our space also limited. The sketches by Mr. A. Bernard Sykes, specially executed from old water-colour drawings in the Crace Collection, British Museum, will be of great value to all who are interested in the topographical history of London.

"I have seen," said Heine, "the greatest wonder which the world can show to the astonished spirit. I have seen it and am still astonished. For ever will there remain fixed indelibly on my memory the stone forests of houses, amid which flows the rushing stream of the faces of living men with all their varied passions, and all their terrible impulses of love, of hunger, and of hatred." Mr. Lovett's book is a successful attempt to give a popular account of this forest of stones and this living tide of men. It is profusely illustrated, and the amount of detail which Mr. Lovett has crowded into its two hundred pages is amazing—all the more so as it does not seem to have clogged his facile pen. The visitor to London could hardly find a better *souvenir* of the great city than Mr. Lovett's "London Pictures."

FICTION IN THREE SIZES.

1. URITH: A TALE OF DARTMOOR. By S. Baring Gould, M.A. Three vols. London: Methuen & Co. 1891.
2. THE PRINCE OF THE GLADES. By Hannah Lynch. Two vols. London: Methuen & Co. 1891.
3. THE ANGLOMANIACS. One vol. London, Paris and Melbourne: Cassell & Company.

THERE is one sentence in the first volume of Mr. Baring Gould's new novel which is particularly suggestive. He is speaking of one of the characters in the story. "Hers," he says, "was one of those nondescript faces which Nature turns out when inventive faculty is exhausted, and she produces a being, much as a worn-out novelist writes a tale, because she is expected to be productive, though she has nothing but hackneyed features to produce." It would be unfair and uncritical to say that in "Urith" there were "nothing but hackneyed features"; it has to a certain extent the merits which we should have expected. But there are traces, unmistakable traces, that the great principle of the survival of the fatuous is at work here, and that the artistic quality of our author is giving place to a useful, rapid, mechanical ability. Mr. Baring Gould was undoubtedly an artist once. He has at times come dangerously near to melodrama; he has been called morbid and melancholy; but we doubt if he ever came nearer to conventionality than in these three volumes. The coincidences of the story suggest to

us rather the laboured ingenuity of a writer than the whimsical dealings of destiny. The thrust of a knife, turned aside almost miraculously by some token on the breast of the man who is attacked, has been familiar to us from childhood. The girl who sacrifices herself on the altar of marriage in order to save her singularly repulsive father, and the villain who marries for money—only to find, when too late, that the money is not there—are characters which have borne the glare of the footlights and the usage of many authors—some better and some worse than Mr. Baring Gould. Nor do we greatly care, when rustic toppers solace themselves with songs, to be suddenly arrested by a footnote, reminding us that our author is an antiquarian as well as a novelist, that the traditional music to the song in question can be purchased, that the geniality of our toppers is but a poor pretence, and that pence and publishers are the only realities. The information such footnotes give is interesting, and it is wanted, but it should be placed at the end of the third volume.

We have said that the story has to a certain extent the merits which we should have expected. The heroine, whose name the story bears, was described by her rival as a "wild, vixenish colt," and the description, although it says nothing of the tenderness and passion of her nature, was not unfair as far as it went. Mr. Baring Gould delights to sketch untamed, or partially tamed, women, and he does it excellently. The sketch of Urith goes far to redeem the story. There are some chapters which recall the author's old work, which could probably have been written by no one but himself, and for which we are properly grateful. There are the signs of deterioration in the book, but it must be owned that Mr. Baring Gould, not quite at his best, is yet very much better than the author of average fiction.

"The Prince of the Glades" is an interesting and romantic story. It deals with conspiring Fenians, heroic riding, and fatal shots. It deals, in short, with a great deal of material which is not particularly new; but it does it very well. Some of the descriptive writing in the course of the story is really admirable; it does not, as might have been expected, always succeed, but it does frequently call up a natural and impressive scene before the eye of the reader. The author does well in avoiding the conventional use of epithets, and would do better if she avoided them still more. The characters are for the most part lifelike enough; the heroine, Camilla, is a particularly good and striking figure. The conclusion of the book is its worst fault. It is the conclusion which the most conventional writer would have been certain to give to it. It is a weak concession to the popular love of a matrimonial ending; it gives the last blow to our sympathies with the hero—sympathies which were already failing, and which could only have been recovered by leaving him desolate and unhappy. His remorse alone is not enough. But the workmanship of the story is far better than that of average fiction; it is at least readable throughout, and most of it will be read with pleasure.

"The Anglomaniacs" is an anonymous satirical story. We do not know whether the book will be popular among the people that it satirises, but somewhere or other it is certain to be widely read. The intimate knowledge which the author displays of his subject, the careful fairness, the spirit and cleverness of the book, are truly remarkable. He makes us forget that the subject has been treated before, because his own treatment is so new and bright. It is not possible here to give an account of all the views which he maintains, but perhaps a quotation from his hero would not do him injustice. The hero is English:—

"There's some excuse for the petty worshippers of caste with us. To get it out of them, they'd have to be boiled down and skimmed and run into a new mould. But you, you Americans, who are born socially to the freedom of the wild horse of the Pampas; who, by the force of your individuality, can set the mark you desire to leave upon your community; who are not bound and swaddled and smothered by hereditary awe for class and title—why aren't you satisfied?"

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

"TEN CENTURIES OF EUROPEAN PROGRESS" is a painstaking attempt to bring within the scope of three hundred and fifty pages all that is most significant in the annals of Europe, from the tenth to the nineteenth century. Mr. Jackson, according to his own showing, has endeavoured to present what he terms a "condensed panoramic view" of the general development of Europe from the Magyar invasion to the present time. A vast array of more or less important facts are placed in chronological order, and in each section of the work a meagre summary is given of the political condition and special characteristics of the century under review. The progress made in science, art, mechanical inventions, exploration, and settlement—to cite but a few examples—is fairly well indicated. The book represents a great deal of patient research, and Mr. Jackson, in its compilation, has evidently availed himself of cues from all quarters. One special feature of the work which merits recognition, is the fact that the author has, in the majority of instances, obtained his information, not from English works of reference, but from authoritative books published in the countries described. Unfortunately, it is next to impossible for any one man to cover so wide a field of human thought and inquiry without being betrayed into inaccuracies of statement; and Mr. Jackson's book is certainly open to criticism in this respect. The arrangement of the work is both ingenious and suggestive, and the summaries, tables, maps, and index render the multifarious facts which are recorded easily accessible. At the same time, the work requires stringent revision, and is worthy of it, for we doubt if there is any other book of the same size in existence, in any language, more closely packed with salient facts and statistics. Mr. Jackson, however, is somewhat opinionated, and his prejudices creep into his narrative in rather an amusing way, especially when he comes to deal with affairs in the present century.

Mr. Roosevelt, who is favourably known by his graphic description of "The Winning of the West," has just contributed to the group of volumes on Historic Towns a book which traces the causes by which a little Dutch trading hamlet was gradually transformed into "New York" as we know it to-day. In brief outline Mr. Roosevelt, in the workmanlike record, has likewise sketched the social, commercial, and political life of the town, at successive stages of its growth. He states that it has been his aim, not so much to collect new information, as to select from the great storehouse of facts which already exist, those which bring out most vividly that which is distinctive in the progress of the city. The book is written temperately, and in the true historical spirit, and it gives a remarkably clear and well-informed account of the era of Dutch supremacy, of the city under the Stuarts, of the unrest which preceded the Revolution, and of the attitude which the inhabitants took during the War of Independence. About a fourth of the book is devoted to the history of New York in the present century, and Mr. Roosevelt wisely attempts to show the part which the city has played in relation to problems which concern the larger life of the country. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the city was the stronghold of the democratic party in the North, and Mr. Roosevelt's own views leap to light in the assertion that the ten years between 1860 and 1870 constitute the worst decade in the political annals of New York, though he is forced to admit that the sombre picture is "relieved by touches of splendid heroism, martial prowess, and civic devotion." One welcome characteristic of this book is its candour; the author seeks, in fact, to gauge with an impartial hand both the strength and weakness of contemporary politics and society as they reveal themselves in the life of the city. He does not shut his eyes to the gross civic corruption, and commercial and social selfishness which abound; but, at the same time, he contends that if there are great European cities with "much cleaner municipal governments," the condition of the rank and file in those cities is much worse than it is in New York. Moreover, though the tyranny of the unscrupulous rich, and the violence of the ignorant poor, are ugly forces with which the community has to reckon, affairs in New York are better, not worse, than they were a generation ago.

We are not surprised to find that Dr. and Mrs. Aveling's little book on "The Working-Class Movement in America" has

rapidly found its way into a second edition. The book is, of course, written from the point of view of Socialists who see what they look for, and who consequently believe that the "movement" which they chronicle in these pages is setting in more and more strongly towards the fulfilment of their own hopes. The German propagandists of Socialism in America are apparently, in Dr. Aveling's opinion, one of the chief obstacles to the triumph of the cause. The book furnishes a startling picture of the attitude in which capital and labour stand to one another, and a not altogether unsuccessful attempt is made in these chapters to justify the assertion that "the capitalist's system came to America as a ready-made article, and with all the force of its inherent, uncompromising brutality it thrusts on the notice of everyone the fact that in society to-day there are only two classes, and that these are enemies." Dr. Aveling derides the notion that there is a community of interests between employers and employed, and he asks us to believe that in America, at least, this "mutual deception" is almost a thing of the past.

Professor Edward Morris, formerly of Oxford, and now of Melbourne, rightly describes "Cassell's Picturesque Australasia," of which he is editor, as a work which seeks to give a full and popular account of the Australasian Colonies. These four handsome volumes give a graphic and reliable description of the scenery, the cities, the pursuits, and the social life of Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania. It is still only a hundred years since the first group of Englishmen landed on the shores of Australia, and this work reveals alike by pen and pencil how vast has been since then the conquest of nature by man. Great towns are springing up rapidly, wealth is accumulating, and education, if not making equal strides, is at least advancing steadily and on wise and far-seeing lines. The many-sided life which now prevails in Australasia is reflected, on the whole, extremely well in these pages, though here and there the artistic instinct reveals itself somewhat too clearly in the literary portion of the book. The book is lavishly illustrated, and in the majority of cases from drawings made on the spot.

Mr. Hazlitt has just enriched The Book-Lover's Library with an amusing volume of "Studies in Jocular Literature." He reminds us that in former times to be a fool, within certain limits, was a walk of life not to be despised either by a man or by his friends. In Anglo-Saxon times, for example, the joke-wright, to borrow Mr. Hazlitt's rather barbarous expression, was not merely a person of consequence, but sometimes could make a fortune quite as easily as a prima-donna to-day. The smiles of a king are all very well in their way, but when they are backed up by the gift of broad lands, the clown ceases to be contemptible. Mr. Hazlitt delves deeply in this little book, not merely into the history, but into the philosophy of the subject; and, with a degree of enthusiasm which does him credit, he even contends valiantly for what may be termed the dignity of the joke. Here it is only fair to allow him to speak for himself:—"The joke has proved in all ages a factor of manifold power and use. It has ridiculed and exposed corruptions in the body politic and in the social machinery. It has preserved records of persons and ideas, and traits of by-gone manners, which must otherwise have perished; and it frequently stands before us with its esoteric moral hidden not much below the ostensible and immediate purport." We share Mr. Hazlitt's honest indignation for what he calls the profanation of the garbler. In other words, the man who mars a joke, and misses its point by a hair. Douglas Jerrold and Charles Lamb, he reminds us—two men who he thinks have never been surpassed in the *mot* in its real meaning and compass—have suffered grievously at the bungling hands of biographers and other well-intentioned admirers. In Mr. Hazlitt's judgment the slightest deviation in such a ticklish realm from the *ipsissima verba* of a humorist is almost an unpardonable offence; indeed, he thinks "that to omit, alter, or modify a single word is nothing less than sacrilege and death—sacrilege to the author, and death to his performance." Everyone with a spark of humour in his composition will appreciate this book, and all the more because it is scholarly as well as entertaining.

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THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1891.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

AGAIN rumours as to the date of the General Election are in the air. Nothing, of course, can be said definitely, for even Ministers themselves are in the dark as to the precise day when they will at last accept battle. But this is certain—that few people now talk of Parliament as likely to run its full course. The Tory wire-pullers in the country are preparing for an appeal to the nation in the autumn. Some people believe that the dissolution may come still earlier, whilst a certain number are inclined to the opinion that Easter, 1892, will see the arrival of the fateful moment. It is curious to observe the temper in which the Ministerialists are making ready for the fight. There is hardly a man among them who, in private conversation, is not prepared frankly to acknowledge that the Opposition will “sweep the country.” Why there should be this feeling of absolute certainty on the part of the Tories as to their own impending defeat it is difficult to say. Their opponents are wisely refraining from any exhibition of a like confidence in their own success. They believe in it as a matter of course, but they are resolved to fight for the victory as stoutly as though there were no odds in their favour and everything depended upon the manner in which the battle was fought in each particular constituency. This is the temper which ensures success, even when circumstances are far less favourable than they are at present to the Liberal cause.

PROBABLY the excessive anxiety of the Tories to get their labour programme or programmes before the country, has deepened the conviction that the General Election will not be long delayed. SIR JOHN GORST has taken MR. STEAD into his confidence, and given his version of the measures which Parliament ought to undertake to satisfy the aspirations of working men. It stops short at commissions of inquiry into the more difficult and important problems with which we have to deal; so that SIR JOHN does not, after all, throw much light upon the real attitude of the Tories towards labour. But that, for the present, they are resolutely bent upon “dishing the Liberals,” if they can effect that process by means of “programmes,” abstract resolutions, and flowery speeches, is certain.

THE Liberal programme has not been placed officially before the country. Why should it be at the present moment? It is better that the Opposition should devote itself to the advocacy of special reforms, which may be carried even during the brief remaining life of the present Parliament. Besides, if the reforms are not carried, Parliamentary discussion will at least tend to show who are and who are not the friends of reform, and what is the value of the “programmes” which are now so thick in the air. On Tuesday, as we have pointed out elsewhere, this test was applied to Tory-Unionist zeal on behalf of Constitutional reform with a remarkable result. By-and-by we shall know whether the present Ministers are prepared to raise the age of work for children under the Factory Acts to twelve—a measure which is certain to be carried by the Liberal party whenever it comes into office. Whilst we are able to arrive at an exact estimate of the composition of the reformers and the anti-reformers in Parliament by means of

debates and divisions on specific questions, it seems rather like a waste of strength to talk about rival programmes. Yet in due time the Liberal programme will be in the hands of the electors, and will not be found wanting in strength or in practical character, despite the sneers of that practised maker of programmes, MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

IT is curious to note that in Thursday morning's *Times* there were printed at full length two speeches each dealing with the Labour question. One was by LORD SALISBURY and the other by MR. PARNELL. It appears that the Member for Cork can still curb the passionate hatred of England which has burst forth in all his recent speeches in Ireland, when he has to address an English audience. On Wednesday, speaking at Clerkenwell, he boldly came forward as an advocate of the cause of the English working man. The English working man, we imagine, will require some kind of security from a politician whose promises are not at present worth quite so much as Bank of England notes in the open market. Perhaps, too, MR. DAVITT could tell us something about MR. PARNELL'S views on the Labour question down to the moment when he was convicted in the Divorce Court. LORD SALISBURY'S speech, which was addressed to the Associated Chambers of Commerce, touched upon those grave tariff difficulties which we have discussed elsewhere, and upon the Labour questions which are exciting so much interest at home. He is for “full and exhaustive discussion and inquiry”—like everybody else; but has nothing beyond vague expressions of mingled hopes and fears and sympathetic regrets to offer to the working man.

A VACANCY has occurred in the Aston division of Birmingham, a constituency which has been represented in the present Parliament by a Conservative, MR. GEORGE KYNOCH. The death of MR. KYNOCH, who for some years past has persistently neglected his Parliamentary duties, gives the electors a chance of recording their opinions on the existing order of things. In 1886, MR. H. G. REID, who had represented the constituency in 1885, was defeated owing to the zeal with which MR. CHAMBERLAIN and his followers espoused the Tory cause. In the present contest the Liberal party will be represented by MR. PHIPSON BEALE, Q.C., whilst CAPTAIN GRICE HUTCHINSON will be the Unionist candidate. There could hardly be a fairer test of strength than that which the election will offer, for both candidates have local influence, both are men of ability, and both are ardent in support of their own cause. If the contest were to be fought anywhere but in the Birmingham district, the result would be a foregone conclusion. “As in 1885” would be the rule here as elsewhere. But we have still to reckon in Birmingham with the influence of MR. CHAMBERLAIN, akin in its character to that of MR. ROEBUCK at Sheffield, and it is at this moment an unknown quantity. Special interest attaches therefore to the contest.

THE *Times* of yesterday published a statement purporting to give the outcome of the South African negotiations, as they have been carried on between MR. CECIL RHODES, SIR HENRY LOCH, and the English Government. The first “outcome” seems to be a negative one. Nothing has been done to satisfy or even to conciliate Portugal, and MR. RHODES, we are told,

awaits with equanimity the lapse of the *modus vivendi* which is at present in force. This will entitle Portugal on her part to refuse any right of way to the territory of the Chartered Company through her possessions, and the result of such a step must be a bitter struggle between the Company and the Portuguese Government. In course of time a railway will be constructed by the Company to the East Coast. MR. H. H. JOHNSTON will have jurisdiction over the whole British sphere between the Zambesi and the German sphere; and MR. RHODES himself will be looked to as virtual Governor of the Company's territories, the Governor of the Cape retaining supreme control as High Commissioner. There is no doubt that the arrangements come to during the recent conferences at the Colonial Office will be satisfactory to the English Colonists; but it remains to be seen in what light they will be viewed by Portugal. A fresh explosion of patriotic anger in that country may have very serious and far-reaching consequences. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the Imperial interests of this country are safe-guarded under the new arrangement.

AMERICA has done herself justice at last, and Congress has formally recognised the right of the author who does not happen to be a citizen of the United States, to retain his property in his own work. We are told that the Copyright Bill is not "an ideal one." It is, in fact, as far from being ideal in its excellence as it well could be. But that matters little. The great principle for which English authors have been struggling through so many years, has at last been acknowledged, and honesty—even towards the humble novelist or poet—has been adopted as the policy of the great Republic. Most heartily do we congratulate the Americans upon this fact. That their consciences should at last have been touched by the cry of the English author, robbed of his offspring; and that they should finally have made up their minds to "put their foot down" on the pretensions of "pirate" publishers and Western "free traders"—in other people's goods—says much for the real grit of the national character, and the determination of the leaders of the country to keep the Republic in every respect abreast of the great States of Europe.

A VERY interesting question which is raised by the passing of the Copyright Bill is the practical effect which it is likely to have upon the English printing and publishing trades. The Bill provides that, in order to secure copyright, a book must be "manufactured"—that is, set up in type and printed—in the United States. At present there is no such restriction on the obtaining of copyright in this country. Consequently, many publishers fear that, unless we adopt a provision similar to the American one, the printing of books will pass almost absolutely away from this country to the other side of the Atlantic—to the serious detriment of the printing and publishing trades. We look upon this fear as altogether unfounded. In the first place, not one book in twenty published in England is likely to have any considerable sale in the United States; and in the next place a book the copyright of which is likely to be of value in both countries will, in almost every case, be worth manufacturing in both. There are many practical objections to the exclusive setting-up of books by English authors in America—such as the difficulties connected with the correction of proofs—which strengthen our belief that this objectionable feature of the American Bill will by no means have the serious consequences which some expect to flow from it.

MONDAY last was a great day in the history of the Wesleyan Methodists, as it was the occasion of a demonstration of their loyalty to the memory of their illustrious founder, the hundredth anniversary of whose death it was. The growth of Methodism, both during the life of JOHN WESLEY and after-

wards, is touched upon elsewhere. It is one of those phenomena of our national life during the past century upon which men of all creeds can look with unalloyed satisfaction. Whatever may have been the drawbacks in the tenets of the sect, in its organisation and in its methods of work, the broad fact remains that it has been a power which has made for righteousness consistently throughout its history. That it is one of the powers of this world to-day is sufficiently obvious. Whether its hold upon the masses will be maintained against the rivalry of movements which have sprung from itself may be open to dispute; but there can be no difference of opinion as to the stability of its influence over the minds of that great middle class to whom WESLEY appealed, and in whom he implanted the seeds of spiritual fervour.

THE Directors of the Bank of England on Thursday made no change in their rate of discount. At the beginning of the week money in the outside market was very scarce and dear, and the rate of discount rose to very nearly 3 per cent.; but on Wednesday there was somewhat of a decline. Apparently the Directors hope that the foreign demand for gold is falling off. It is believed that for the present, at all events, the Russian Government will not take any more. On Friday and Monday it took about £700,000. It has still a very large balance in London, but for some time to come it is not thought probable that it will draw upon that. The German demand is expected to be satisfied by the shipments from New York. But the immediate course of the market will be regulated chiefly by the course of events in London. There is a very apprehensive feeling, as we point out elsewhere, regarding more particularly houses connected with South America. If there should be any serious failure, or even if the existing distrust should increase, the rates of interest and discount may advance sharply. On the other hand, if there be no untoward accidents, money is likely to become cheaper in a week or two. It can hardly, however, become very cheap if, as is thought probable now, the joint-stock banks so far accept the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to publish monthly accounts and to increase the reserves which they keep. That would lessen the supply of loanable capital and maintain rates higher than they otherwise would be. The price of silver has not fluctuated so much this week as for some time past. It is now 44½d. per oz., but there has been a sharp fall in silver securities, more particularly Indian Rupee paper, the market being disturbed by reported forgeries.

THE Stock Markets have been very flat all through the week, and business has been almost entirely suspended. The fears entertained of serious financial difficulties are, no doubt, much exaggerated; but there is sufficient foundation for them to deter operators from increasing their risks. At the same time the news from South America is very discouraging. The crisis in the Argentine Republic is going from bad to worse; the civil war in Chili is likely to continue for a considerable time; and there is no improvement in the state of affairs in Brazil. The excitement in Paris caused by the visit of the EMPRESS FREDERICK has also somewhat disturbed markets, as it shows how easily the peace of Europe might be disturbed; and, over and above all this, the fear that the banks generally may call in loans in order to increase their reserves is leading to an apprehension that the money market may be dearer than appeared probable lately. There have also been reports of financial difficulties in South Africa. Lately speculators have turned away from the other markets, believing that the time was approaching for a larger business in gold shares, but the reports of failures have caused a fall. Altogether the markets are more stagnant than they have been for a very long time past.

CLEARING THE DECKS.

BOTH political parties are now "clearing their decks" for the general action which every day draws nearer. The debate on Tuesday on Mr. Stansfeld's resolution and the amendment of Mr. Howorth has done something to define the attitude of both parties. It makes it evident that there will be no great difference in the professions made by Liberals and Tories when they stand face to face with the country. The business of the electors will be to determine how far the professions on either side are sincere, and to give their support to those who convince them that they really mean what they say. The debate on One Man One Vote ought to satisfy everybody upon one point at all events. The Liberals are manifestly anxious to get to the practical reform of our electoral system at the earliest possible moment, whilst their opponents, with Mr. Chamberlain at their head, are equally resolute in their determination to stave off reform as long as possible. This, at all events, is the evident purpose of Mr. Howorth's clumsy amendment to Mr. Stansfeld's motion. The member for Halifax has a distinct proposal to make. It is one the justice of which hardly anyone pretends to deny. It is also one which, if Parliament is so minded, may be brought into effect almost immediately—that is to say, before the General Election. Ministers dare not meet the proposal with a direct negative, so they put up Mr. Howorth to urge that nothing should be done until a scheme much greater in its character, and full of special difficulties, is also ripe for consideration. The half-loaf is to be refused because the whole loaf is not yet ready for us. That is the plain English of Mr. Howorth's proposal, and it is instructive to observe that in this policy of obstructing an immediate and practical reform, the unofficial representative of the Tory party had the support of no inconsiderable portion of the Liberal Unionist party.

Of the merits of Mr. Stansfeld's proposal it is hardly necessary to speak here. The abuse of plurality of votes has only been tolerated down to the present moment because it is one of those anachronisms in our free constitution to which we have become accustomed in course of time. The absurdity of allowing A to vote in a dozen different constituencies, whilst B, C, and the rest of the alphabet are only permitted to vote in one, is too obvious to need demonstration. As for the length of residence needed to qualify a voter, and the hideous jumble of the registration system, we have only to appeal to the authorities, to whatever party they may belong, in order to establish the case for reform. Here, then, was a plain issue set before the House of Commons. It was asked to undertake a most necessary work of reform which it could easily accomplish during the present session. Hardly a man on the Ministerial side of the House dared to object to that reform on its merits; the country is known to be practically unanimous in its favour. But it was rejected all the same—and why? Because an ingenious supporter of the Ministry was able to trail a red herring across the track, and to give his friends the opportunity of defeating Mr. Stansfeld's proposal without appearing to oppose it. We leave it to the electors to say whether Liberal or Conservative proved himself on Tuesday to be the better friend of the cause which each professed to advocate. For our part we should be glad to see the first of Mr. Stansfeld's proposals simplified in one direction. "One man one vote" ought to mean manhood suffrage, pure and simple. For such a measure of reform the nation is now ripe, and perhaps if Mr. Stansfeld had taken this high ground, even Mr. Howorth would have found it impossible to devise

any means for evading the issue submitted to Parliament. But even as it is we have learned once more the real meaning of Tory professions in favour of reform. The measure which none dare kick to death may yet be stifled in the embrace of a simulated affection.

It will be well if the lesson taught on Tuesday be not repeated in regard to many other matters—notably the social reforms of which we now hear so much. There is, for example, the Royal Commission on the hours of labour. We are prepared to welcome that Commission if we can only be assured that it has been proposed in good faith. But in how many cases has a Royal Commission proved to be the grave of the movement committed to it! In the present case it is at all events obvious that the new Commission has been hailed with quite as much delight by the enemies of social reform as by its friends. Let us know what the composition of the Commission is to be, what are to be the terms of the questions referred to it, and then we shall be in a better position than we can pretend to be in at present to decide as to the good faith of its authors. But meanwhile Ministers can make their appeal to the country in their new character as the "friends of labour," and unless the electors exercise a little prudence and hold back until they know exactly what it is that the Government mean to do, they may be caught in a trap hardly better baited than that laid by the ingenious Mr. Howorth on Tuesday evening. For the present it is clear that the Government mean to push forward the "dishing process" with great vigour, in view of the approaching election. Of course, if the dishing were anything but illusory, the ardent advocates of certain social reforms might be induced to accept the Ministerial proposals without caring for the quarter from which they came. But—

"Honey from silk-worms who can gather,
Or silk from the yellow bee?"

Who is there who really believes that the leaders of the present coalition, men like Lord Salisbury and Lord Hartington, have the slightest intention of taking steps which must lead in the end to something in the nature of a social revolution, and which must in any case destroy that system of privilege so dear to the Tory heart? By all means let ardent reformers hear what Tory advocates of reforms—social and political—have to say, but let them at least look the gift-horse of a Tory programme in the teeth. We were taught on Tuesday evening how hypocritical are the professions of a desire for electoral equality on the part of Ministers and their friends. It is more than probable that when their social proposals are laid before us, we shall find, upon a critical examination, that their one purpose is to trick us with illusory hopes, and measures, the real object of which is to frustrate the very reforms they profess to foster.

GRAPES FROM THORNS.

PRINCE BISMARCK has his opportunity at last. He can point the finger of scorn at the diplomacy of his supplanter. Hitherto there has not been much reason in the growls from Friderichsruhe. Since the old Chancellor's effacement Germany has pursued her way without suffering any check. The Anglo-German Agreement showed that General von Caprivi could handle Lord Salisbury quite as adroitly as his predecessor. Europe has never had a moment's uneasiness in consequence of Prince Bismarck's fall. All the criticisms in the Hamburg journal through which the discarded statesman has irritated his Imperial master, have been as idle as if they had

proceeded from some irresponsible scribbler. Alike in foreign and domestic affairs, the Emperor and his adviser have shown tact and moderation. But now comes the first error—not one of those irretrievable steps which lead to grave national embarrassment, but a miscalculation, a piece of mistaken, though generous, sentiment. It is easy to see the use which Prince Bismarck can make of this. The man of blood and iron never made a concession to sentiment, and he will argue that the policy which sent the Empress Frederick to Paris exposed Germany to a rebuff from an inveterate enemy. Had his dynasty remained in power this would never have happened. He would not have attempted to gather German grapes from French thorns. He would have seen that any effort to conciliate France must be as futile as the abrogation of the Anti-Socialist law. All this Prince Bismarck can say with a good deal of force, and the one danger of the situation is that such criticism may exasperate the Emperor to take some measure even more provocative than the rigid enforcement of the passport regulations in Alsace-Lorraine. Both dignity and sound policy point to very different action. After all, there has been no dispute between the two Governments. The susceptibilities of the Empress Frederick have been so little ruffled by her reception in Paris that she has actually thanked the Parisians for their courtesy. If any people have come out of this business with loss of credit, they are the artists who first accepted the invitation to send their works to the Berlin Exhibition, and then changed their minds. They have exercised a feminine privilege in deference to patriotic pressure, and sensible Germans may reflect with satisfaction that if the Kaiser was prompted by an ill-judged sentiment, it was at least a worthier feeling than that which has balked him.

A foolish attempt is being made in some quarters to show that the failure of the Emperor William's good intentions is due to his arrogant self-will. The world at large has every reason to be grateful to him for setting the example of a chivalrous spirit. It was not entirely irrational to suppose that French art would separate itself from national prejudices for the sake of vindicating its superiority in Europe. If all Germans had been animated by the sentiments of the *Cologne Gazette*, it might have been objected that to invite French painters to wear their laurels in Berlin was to slight the Fatherland. M. Dettaille and his colleagues had the opportunity of enjoying a signal triumph, which was offered to them personally by the most distinguished member of the Emperor's family. No act of courtesy could have been better conceived. But if there is any truth in the gossip which comes from Paris, the failure of the Empress Frederick's mission was caused by social jealousies, by small blunders in *finesse*, by a hundred things which had nothing whatever to do with M. Déroulède's patriotic outpourings. The German Embassy was maladroit, and a most delicate piece of diplomacy was ruined by bungling. To this Prince Bismarck would probably reply that it is no business of German representatives in Paris to dance attendance on the foibles of French artists, or to discover whose old furniture the Emperor's mother might be taken to see without mortally offending a rival connoisseur. Walking on egg-shells was evidently an easy achievement compared with the task of guiding the Empress Frederick through the labyrinth of French susceptibilities. But the simplicity and goodwill which she manifested throughout this difficult experience might have disarmed the most embittered prejudice. The French would have sacrificed nothing if they had accepted this advance precisely in the spirit in which it was made,

instead of regarding it as an attempt to seduce their artists from their devotion to Alsace and Lorraine. If the memories of Waterloo were as venomous as those of St. Cloud we might never see a French work of art in London.

It is some satisfaction that this episode has done comparatively little mischief. The feeling in Paris has calmed down, and the railings of the Chauvinist section of the German press have found no echoes. The Emperor William will show a commendable self-restraint by relaxing the irksome regulations in Alsace and Lorraine, which, rightly or wrongly, are regarded as a policy of reprisal. He can afford to be magnanimous, though his misconception of French sentiment is a notable illustration of the vanity of human wishes. The lustre of his reign will not be dimmed in history because he offered an olive branch which was rejected. But this singular transaction may have some discouragement for the optimists who look forward to the establishment of universal arbitration and the extinction of national hatreds. From the seeds of war spring the inexorable crops of dragons' teeth, and the grain of a happier spirit falls amongst thorns and is choked. Who can so water the soil that the produce shall fill the garner of peace?

HOW HAS CANADA GONE?

WE fully realise, and heartily sympathise with, the indignation which has been expressed by the Liberals of Canada in regard to the moment chosen by Sir John Macdonald for the Canadian elections. He has trampled on the feelings and disregarded the interests of everyone, including those English journalists whose lucubrations are published on the Saturday. Writing as we do at the moment when the Canadian electors are struggling through the snow to the polling-booths, we are weighed down by the knowledge that whatever we may venture in the shape of prophecy will fall under the coldly critical eye of readers who have learnt the result from their daily paper. But working even under these disheartening conditions, we refuse to take refuge in the easy expedient of saying ditto to the man in the street or in the club window, who airily disposes of the problem by assuring his hearers that "The Old Man will simply waltz in." Will he? We shall see. He has much in his favour. In the first place we must remember who the Canadians are, and why they are where they are. Leaving the floating element of immigrants out of count, the Canadian people are either French clericals, clinging frantically to old custom and ecclesiastical privilege, which the British connection alone seems capable of safeguarding; or they are the descendants of whatever was Tory and monarchical in feeling throughout English America—of men who forsook home and business rather than doff the hat to the ensign of Republicanism. And the monarchical bias of the Canadian mind, be it remembered, is perpetually maintained in vigour by that purging process which has driven a million of Canadians to seek the larger and fuller life of a Republic. Canada is the country of survivals. It is the Ulster of North America. That it has voluntarily made overtures for a closer union with the States is as improbable as if Ulster, having once received an autonomy of its own, were to apply for representation in the Parliament of College Green. And then the omens are propitious for Sir John Macdonald. Sir Richard Cartwright is in a position which strikingly resembles that of Mr. Gladstone in 1886. He has "rushed" the Canadian mind with an idea for which, as far as can be judged, it was

not prepared. The Thanes are deserting him. The luck in small things is against him. The snowstorm of the present week was not less disastrous for him than the various hurricanes by which Providence has, from time to time, during the last three centuries, driven off invaders from these sacred shores. Sir Richard Cartwright's hope was in the farmers, and the snow has not only cut short their political education a week before the proper time, but it must have been in great measure an absolute bar to their giving effective expression to so much of the Liberal creed as they have been able to assimilate. On the other hand, there are considerations which should prepare our minds for what may be a sad awakening to the men in the street and the club window. Business is business. However America may amend the McKinley Tariff for the convenience of those who consume European manufactures, it will maintain it as it is so far as it damages Canada. If Mr. Van Horne, of the Canadian Pacific, has thrown his weight into the Conservative scale, it is not to be forgotten that Mr. Sargeant, of the Grand Trunk, has entered his passionate protest against any words or policy which might precipitate the disaster of a Yankee boycott against Canadian traffic. The Canadians are not so well off as they were, and hardly any, save professional politicians, fail to ascribe their decrease of prosperity to "the National Policy." Many who have approved that policy up to the present as consolidating the national life, think that it has had its day. From a commercial and financial point of view, Sir John Macdonald gave away half his case when he adopted the plank of limited reciprocity. And the other half went when the Americans made it known that no proposals for limited reciprocity would now be entertained. There is nothing left in all his programme but the one sentence—"A British subject I was born, and a British subject I will die." If he is saved, it is those words which will save him. Then, again, the long-continued, flagrant and cynical corruption of Canadian politics cannot fail of their effect upon the Canadian electorate. Bribery is politically fruitful only so long as the bribe is in process of disbursement. No man, who has received his bribe, cares to see the process repeated for the benefit of his neighbour. Sir John Macdonald has borrowed over one hundred million dollars for public works, and spent them with a strict regard to his own electoral advantage; but it does not follow that those on whom they have been spent will in their gratitude ruin themselves to keep him in office. On the top of his long record of electoral corruption comes his latest achievement of "letter-stealing," as Sir Richard Cartwright frankly describes it. That policy may have increased the feeling in his favour over here; but amongst Canadians, who appreciated exactly how far the avowed Liberals of Canada were or were not in favour of North American unity, his theatrical revelation of Mr. Edward Farrer's veiled treason has had no real effect.

If Sir John Macdonald has been successful at the polls, it will not be the end of the matter. It will merely stir the United States into a more active policy of "pressure." At all points of contact, on sea and on land, the Yankee will show himself a bad and an unfeeling neighbour. Passion will be gradually aroused on each side. The Canadian Tories will undoubtedly appeal to the Mother Country for commercial union. To that appeal we opine that business England has but one answer to make—a *non possumus*; and in that event, the Canadian Tories themselves may assume an attitude towards the Imperial connection more outspoken than anything which we have yet heard from their responsible rivals.

On the other hand, if Sir John Macdonald has

been judged adversely by the Canadian people, we should prepare ourselves for consequences which will go far beyond the mere adoption of a uniform tariff. Unity of tariff involves unity of regulations, a unification of Customs service, and, finally, a central control both for legislation and administration. An alliance in Customs matters will prompt to a postal alliance, to a monetary alliance, to an alliance in the great work of hunting down crime. Once the Customs barrier is broken through, it is difficult to see where the process of unification can stop; or how the two halves of a unified community can agree to differ on the fundamental, although sentimental, question of Monarchy *versus* Republicanism. Whichever way the cat has jumped, we do not regard the present circumstances as favouring a continued stability of British dominion on the American Continent. Our best hope is that the drawing nearer of Canada to the United States might draw us closer to the latter, and lead the way to that larger federation of the English-speaking races, which is, after all, the only rational interpretation of the Brummagem "Federation" advocated in the noisy and nauseating orations of such politicians as Mr. Howard Vincent, C.B., M.P., and his respected friend "Mr. Faithfull Begg," whoever the latter may be.

BACK TO PROTECTION?

A VERY melancholy little document is the first report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the approaching expiry of various European Commercial Treaties. Its purport must long ago have been anticipated; but none the less it seems to sound the knell of European Free Trade, as Cobden initiated it, with every hope and prospect of its extension, in 1860. On the face of it, France, which seems determined to lead the down-grade movement to Protection, as thirty years ago she was induced to head the march up to perfect freedom of commerce, has done nothing more than she has been threatening to do. She will not break a commercial treaty with us, for the simple reason that she has no such instrument. Since 1882 we have only had a navigation treaty with her. But we were not conspicuously worse off than we were before, owing to the acceptance by Belgium and Switzerland of the commercial treaty which Sir Charles Dilke did not think it worth our while to accept. Our own tariff has been assimilated to the Belgian and Swiss rates by the operation of the French "Law" of February 28th, 1882, which accorded to us, though not to our colonial produce, "the most favoured nation treatment." Now this advantage we are not likely to lose. We are still, *pace* Mr. Howard Vincent, a free-trading country, and our open ports will always admit French goods at tariffs lower than those of any European Power. What is going to happen, however, is something quite as serious. The Belgian and Swiss treaties expire on the 1st of February, 1892. France will not renew them. Her Government, pressed by the agricultural and manufacturing interests which were all but too strong for Napoleon and Rouher in 1860, will declare that she has had enough of commercial treaties. She will retain "the most favoured nation" system for general purposes, to which Germany bound her afresh in the Treaty of Frankfort. But she will revise her tariff in a wholly protectionist sense. She will henceforth have two scales of tariff—one the bad old general tariff considerably raised, then a so-called minimum tariff, which will be the general tariff in another dress—that is to say, will increase the duties on certain specified classes of goods by an average of twenty-four per cent. This will be

the rate of increase on our cotton yarns and tissues, and on woollen fabrics—the special subjects of negotiation between Cobden and the Emperor. On processes and articles which partake less of the nature of raw material, the increase of duty will be still larger. No wonder that Mr. Mundella's Committee characterise the act as one of "hostility" to our trade, and as an incitement to Europe to enter on a new commercial war.

That is, unfortunately, precisely what it means; and the direct invitation to a campaign of tariffs is in no way qualified by the fact that the governing rule of European trade will still be the "most favoured nation" treatment. This ingenious plan was very justly called the "sheet-anchor of Free Trade." The anchor, however, only holds when the tide is running in the Free Trade direction. Its effect was admirable when France accepted it as a maxim of international bargaining, and when we at a stroke opened our ports and hers, not simply to the two nations concerned, but to an informal European Zollverein, which has never been absolutely dissolved, and each member of which has benefited by each successive lowering of the level of Protective duties. Unhappily the process is now being reversed. The wall is not being lowered, but raised. The great Free Trade gun is turned against us. France increases the severity of the treatment she awards to her "most-favoured" commercial ally. Each member of the old Zollverein will follow her example. The new minimum tariff, which will virtually exclude a proportion of our goods, will become the lower-water level of a perpetually rising flood of Protection, which will envelop every European nation but our own. France has definitely committed herself to the taxation of raw material, and she will be driven to buttress an essentially false position by giving "drawbacks" on exports to her manufacturers. It is still more melancholy to think that the weakness of her Government in yielding to the Protectionist outcry will be enforced by the Customs Committee of the Chamber, which has already enhanced some of the duties fixed in the "Projet de Loi." It was the Chamber of 1860 which, had Napoleon been persuaded to consult it, would have smashed Cobden's treaty. To-day, apparently, it is as much dominated by the iron and silk and cotton industries as ever, and we may confidently count on it to wipe out thirty years of commercial progress, and to cancel the one good deed which, thanks to the deft genius of a great Englishman, history associates with the name of the Third Napoleon. We, of course, shall not change. We are too well grounded in the A B C of sound economic doctrine to join in any insane act of retaliation. That, much more than the policy of "remonstrance"—which Lord Salisbury last Wednesday covered with cheap scorn—deserves to be dubbed the politics of the nursery, for it is the first fatuous impulse of nations in their economic childhood. We have simply to wait till Europe swings back again into the Free Trade cycle, which she will leave to her own exceeding hurt.

THE LONDON WATER QUESTION.

NOW that Mr. Causton's Bill has been read a second time we may take it for granted that the House of Commons "means business" in the matter of the charges of the London Water Companies. It is true that the Bill has merely been allowed to pass its second reading in order to be referred to the Select Committee on the London Water Supply, and it runs a grave risk of

being swamped by the greater question. But the matter of charge is urgent, and Mr. Ritchie sees, with perfect clearness, the political danger of delay. The position of the London householder in this matter is, indeed, nothing less than a public scandal. In April next the new valuation of the Metropolis will come into force, and the total rateable value will jump from thirty to at least thirty-one and a half millions sterling. If no change in the law is made, the eight London Water Companies will send in their next bills swollen by about 4 per cent. on this increase without distributing a pint more water than before. The extra income of about £50,000 per annum will be a clear addition to the net profits of the shareholders, who expect next year to be bought out at between twenty and thirty years' purchase. On the 1st of April next—an appropriate day for Londoners—the amount for which they are virtually held to ransom will rise by at least a million sterling. This is the charming *poisson d'Avril* which the framers of the Valuation (Metropolis) Act unconsciously prepared for us. It must be remembered that the increase in the valuation on the quinquennial revision does not represent new houses or rebuilding. The new premises occupied during about nine-tenths of the quinquennial period have already come into rating in the periodical supplementary valuation lists. On all these points of new supply, representing about £400,000 a year of annual value, the Water Companies have already been allowed to levy their rates. The quinquennial rise is almost entirely due either to sheer "unearned increment" of land values or increased accuracy of assessment. It is hard to discover why either of these causes should increase the aggregate price of London's water supply.

It is not as if the increased valuation formed a part of any bargain with the Water Companies. These were established, the oldest nearly three centuries ago, the youngest a whole generation ago, long before the Act of 1869 provided for an effective periodical revision of the metropolitan valuation. That Act was passed with a view to the stricter enforcement of the Income Tax (Schedule A), and the more equitable partition of the aggregate burdens of London government. There was, it may safely be said, no thought and no intention of quinquennially increasing one of the most important of those burdens. Our water-rates now come to one-fifth of all the cost of London government and London poor-relief. In 1869 they were only a little over one-third of their present amount. During that time the annual rateable value of London has grown by over 16 millions sterling, of which at least 7 millions represents merely the automatic rise in value of London real estate. What this has meant to the water shareholders is shown by the growth in the market value of their stock. In 1871 their ten millions of expenditure were worth over fourteen millions, a premium of 44 per cent. In 1890 the fourteen and a half millions expended were worth thirty-three and a half millions, or a premium of 125 per cent. The unearned increment of London water shares has been even greater in proportion than the unearned increment of London land; and because the Water Companies have enjoyed the unexpected gain of annually charging rates on the latter unearned increment, we shall be called upon to pay for their mains at least seven millions sterling more than they could have asked had this fortuitous item been excluded.

This is the increased grip upon the London householder which Mr. Causton desires to stop for the future. His Bill would prevent the companies from ever exceeding the existing valuation on any house, unless, by rebuilding or otherwise, an

additional supply of water is required. So moderate is this demand that one of the eight companies has already intimated its willingness to accept it. So unreasonable would be its rejection that the Ministerial Whips warned their leaders not to divide upon it. Not even the strongest Metropolitan Conservative member cares to be held responsible for an increased water rate next Michaelmas in every house in his constituency. Parliament has, indeed, not scrupled in past years to revise the charges of the Water Companies. In 1885, as Lord Bramwell unkindly points out to the *Economist*, Mr. Torrens' Act forbade them to levy their statutory percentage upon the full annual value, and restricted them thenceforth to the "rateable value," an amount, as Lord Bramwell observes, "which was practically five-sixths only of the value. It was a downright confiscation, and therefore a precedent for another. It caused a loss to the Vauxhall Company of £9,000 a year."

But those who, like Lord Bramwell, still adhere to the "good old plan," and regard even accidental power to tax the public as an indefeasible title, are to-day few and far between. The Select Committee will have before them the fact that, as Sir W. Harcourt's Committee observed in 1880, "if the contention of the companies is well founded, the population of the Metropolis and its suburbs, amounting to four millions of people, would be left at the mercy of certain trading companies armed with the power of raising the price of one of the first necessities of life to an extent practically without any limit: a situation from which the companies seem to consider there is no escape, except in the purchase of their undertakings at such a price as they may be willing to accept." Are we, either in law or in equity, compelled to buy up this income-yielding right as if it were Consols?

Sir Thomas Farrer, in a weighty article in the current number of the *New Review*, concurs with Sir W. Harcourt in emphatically answering "No," and his readers can, we think, hardly fail to agree with him. The former Secretary of the Board of Trade shows how inevitable is the early construction of works for an entirely new supply; how the Lea is already giving out, and the Thames near exhaustion, as a source of potable water; how the existing machinery of distribution and filtration is, in any case, defective; and how "aqueducts larger than Rome ever contemplated" must be undertaken for the city whose size and whose wealth Rome itself never approached. How, then, in the face of these new needs, can the Metropolis be asked to pay thirty-three millions sterling for the obsolete plant which has already yielded its owners such an excellent return for their outlay?

"But Parliament," continued Sir W. Harcourt's Committee, "is not unequal to redress such mischiefs to the public interests. The manner in which the gas companies have been dealt with by Parliament may be referred to in illustration of the methods by which a remedy for such a state of things may be effectually provided." For, be it always remembered, the eight London water companies do not possess, and have never possessed, any statutory monopoly of supply. As with the gas companies, in past years active competition existed between them, and even to-day two companies occasionally possess rival powers to supply the same area. Any landowner may, like the great breweries, seek his own supply from his own well. Any combination of persons may exercise a similar right. The St. Pancras Board of Guardians already supplies its workhouse in this way, at the expense of public funds and to the serious loss of the New River Company. The Metropolitan Board of Works, before its extinction, was seeking

powers to provide an altogether new supply for the whole metropolis. Just as the recalcitrant gas companies were brought to terms by the threat of a competing scheme by the City Corporation, so must our "water lords" be dealt with by the London County Council. We must go to the companies with two simultaneous Bills, backed by the Ministry of the day. In the one hand, London must present an offer to purchase their plant and mains at a fair valuation as they now exist, without reference either to cost or to Stock Exchange share quotations. In the other hand Londoners must hold the right to seek for themselves a new supply of the prime necessity of urban life, and to provide for themselves the most improved methods of filtration and distribution. Negotiations on any other basis can hardly fail to lead to the deadlock of 1880, which proved fatal to Lord Beaconsfield's Administration. Any repetition of the financial proposals of that year may be trusted to produce to-day no less a storm among the six hundred thousand metropolitan electors.

THE ARGENTINE CRISIS.

THE alarm excited last week by the embarrassments of some of the great houses interested in the Argentine Republic abated for a day or two, but have again revived, although the greatest of them has received temporary assistance, and it is believed that measures are being taken for placing it upon a safe footing. There is no doubt that the embarrassments are very real and very serious. The houses had brought out too many Argentine issues of all kinds, and apparently had been obliged to take up a large proportion of the securities which the public refused to subscribe for. Some of them also guaranteed railway contractors and others, and in these and other ways incurred vast liabilities. But there appears to be equally no doubt that the assets are very large and very valuable. Those who have looked into the affairs of the principal houses talked about have satisfied themselves that, even if the Argentine securities held are valued very much below the present quotations, the assets exceed considerably the liabilities. But though they are unquestionably valuable they are not readily saleable. Some of them are of a character for which it is not easy to find purchasers. Others have depreciated in consequence of the crisis through which the City is passing. The result is that while the houses have very large and very valuable assets, they cannot sell them, and they cannot pledge them; so that a week or ten days ago it was feared that, whilst solvent, one of them would be unable to obtain ready cash to fulfil its engagements. Happily assistance has been given which has enabled it to get over its temporary embarrassment, and now arrangements, it is understood, are under consideration for converting the business into a Limited Liability Company. It is said that the share capital is to be a couple of millions sterling, and that there are to be debentures for between one and two millions, the latter representing, we presume, the assistance that has lately been afforded to the house. It remains to be seen whether it will be possible to place these debentures. Of course, there is a price at which they can be sold; though whether that price would be deemed sufficient is another matter. But whether the conversion takes place or not, there are good grounds for concluding that the assistance given has warded off the temporary difficulties, and that, therefore, no suspension is to be apprehended. Yet, though the fears entertained respecting this house

are now found to have been exaggerated, a very uneasy feeling still remains in the City. The names of other houses are again being made free with, and there is anxiety, if not actual apprehension. The explanation is to be found in the exceedingly unfavourable intelligence from the Argentine Republic.

The text of the Act for funding the interest on the debt, as well as the guarantees given to industrial companies, which passed the Argentine Congress at the beginning of January, reached this country at the end of last week, and were at once submitted to the legal advisers of the London Committee, together with the authority sent to Dr. Plaza. They were found satisfactory, and the agreement was signed on Thursday. It is also believed that the purchase by the Argentine Government of the Buenos Ayres Waterworks will be soon effected. A little while ago the negotiations were nearly broken off, there being a difference of about £800,000 between the Government and the company. The difference is now narrowed down to £300,000, and a compromise has become comparatively easy. The City hopes that if these two arrangements are made a better feeling will arise. We are not ourselves quite of that opinion. We have pointed out the objections we hold to the plan for funding the coupons and the guarantees, and we still more strongly object to the purchase of the waterworks. We concede fully that the Government cannot pay cash, and therefore that it must make some kind of compromise with its creditors. But we hold that the sterling bondholders ought to have priority over all other creditors, that the new debt to be created ought to rank even after the guarantees, and that the waterworks should rank still later.

But, without dwelling upon these matters now, we would point out that the difficulties of the Republic are too great to allow of an early improvement. All classes have been plunged into distress. The owners of lands and houses have borrowed within a few years about four hundred millions of dollars on mortgage of their properties, which, taken at par, would represent about eighty millions sterling; and it is to be recollected that the whole population is only about four millions. Interest and Sinking Fund upon this crushing debt range from about 7 per cent. to 9 per cent. It is not necessary to do more to show that there must be almost as universal insolvency amongst the house and land owners of the Argentine Republic, as there was in Ireland when the Encumbered Estates Court was created. Then, again, the banks are utterly insolvent. The Finance Minister himself has declared so in the most emphatic terms, and the foreign banks, which alone are well managed and have resources, are regarded by the Government as enemies. These banks have quite lately been subjected to a tax of 2 per cent. upon their deposits and 10 per cent. upon their profits. It need hardly be said that the banks will not pay these taxes out of their own funds; they will take very good care to make their customers bear the burden. The effect, therefore, of the new taxation is to make the rate of interest very much higher than it was already. In other words, in a time of panic the Government is making it more difficult than it necessarily must be for any man in business to get accommodation from the banks. Over and above all this, the fall in prices, the political alarm, and the shock to credit have utterly disorganised trade of every kind. Business is at a standstill and there is universal distrust. As a natural consequence the railways and other industrial concerns are finding their traffics falling off, and in every direction there is loss, if not actual distress.

The economic disorganisation is aggravated by

political alarm. The present Government, it will be recollected, was raised to power last summer by an insurrection in Buenos Ayres. Great hopes were entertained of the new men; but unfortunately they have utterly disappointed them. The President himself, while promising in the most emphatic manner to abandon all the evil courses of his predecessor, is alleged to have given new guarantees. General Roca, the Minister of the Interior, is accused of manipulating the constituencies somewhat after the fashion that has brought about the civil war in Chili. And Dr. Lopez, the Finance Minister, has committed mistakes hardly less serious than those of his two predecessors. The result of all is a feeling of exasperation, and for months past there has been danger of another rising. Indeed the danger a couple of weeks ago became so great that a state of siege was proclaimed. To add to the gravity of the situation there is a very bad feeling between Buenos Ayres and the other Provinces. Much is hoped from General Mitre, who is on his way out from Europe. He may be able to control his own party and to prevent serious disturbance. But unquestionably the situation is very grave. And it is all the graver if, as appears, the Government is unable to pay its way. On Wednesday the President applied to the foreign banks for a loan of 20,000,000 dollars paper, and was refused. If this means that the banks will not trust him, it is a very grave matter. If it means that he will not accept their terms, preferring to issue more inconvertible paper, he is breaking his word to the London Committee, is depreciating still more the inconvertible paper, and thereby is aggravating both the economic crisis and the political danger. The political and economical condition of the Argentine Republic being such, there is little ground for hope that an improvement can come soon, and if it does not the embarrassments of the houses which hold too many Argentine securities, and which have committed themselves in the way of railway construction or the like, will only too probably be increased. At all events, the prospect that their affairs will grow better is not great.

ON GREEN BENCHES.

"THE best ball bowled this Session," was the comment of a Liberal leader on the debate on Mr. Provand's motion to increase the taxation of land. Needless to add, the bowler was the veteran whose all-round play extends over a trifle of fifty years. And a very snaky ball it was. The debate, as Mr. Provand started it, promised little more than a useful statement of undeniable fact concerning the Great Historic Shuffle under which the landlord has escaped all but the merest fraction of his share of public burdens. It was excellent, for instance, to recall Mr. Goschen's attempt twenty years ago to secure the division of the rate, and to quote, much to the Chancellor's discomfort, his famous comparison between the taxation of land abroad and in this country. Mr. Provand did real justice to these sides of his argument, but he is hardly an inspiring orator. Melancholy has marked him for its own; and there is a high Presbyterian note in his voice which served to mar the excellent quality of his speech. Mr. Gladstone, who had edged along the bench in his usual fashion of getting within ear-shot of below-the-gangway talkers, listened with a slightly relaxed air, which grew on him visibly under the influence of Mr. Stuart's oratory. Luckily for the Liberal leader and for the debate, Mr. Chaplin was for some unaccountable reason put up to answer Mr. Provand, though Mr. Goschen, blotting-pad in hand, was in his place, and, it is to be presumed, thoroughly equal to

the task of answering his own arguments. Mr. Chaplin's presence and speech possess a kind of irritant attraction for Mr. Gladstone. They have crossed swords and bludgeons more than once, with results—to Mr. Chaplin. In particular, the notion of the big Lincolnshire squire as an amateur Chancellor—not of the Duchy, but of the Exchequer—had its piquant side. So all at once Mr. Gladstone sat bolt upright; a very wide-awake old lion indeed. The next moment he had his pencil out, and a little later he had despatched an aide to the library for references. The speech which provoked these demonstrations was in truth an exquisitely foolish one, the orator's naïve pleasure in it prettily contrasting with the dismay legibly written on Mr. Goschen's prudent face. In the course of it, Mr. Chaplin admitted (1) that Protective duties enhanced the price of agricultural produce; (2) that the rural rates fell eventually on land—an abstract economic truth, subject of course to large deductions in the case of urban land; and (3) that the landlords were entitled to further relief. It was these little slips which set Mr. Gladstone "on the pounce." He treated the House to one of the most delightful bits of verbal fence which ever pleased its eye and ear, but, unfortunately for his opponent, he had taken the button off his foil. With sweeping courtesy—like all great *maîtres d'armes*, Mr. Gladstone is terribly courteous—he made Mr. Chaplin a "present of Mr. Henry George," out of whom the Chancellor *ad hoc* had woven a good deal of rather loose rhetoric. Having cleared the ground of battle he pressed home his first thrust. Here was an admission from an ex-Protectionist leader, that the aim of Protective duties was to benefit the landlords. For that end, then, Mr. Chaplin's party had fought—the noble end of self-interest. Poor Mr. Chaplin wriggled under this stroke, only to fall afresh on his opponent's keen and ready blade. Touching that point concerning rural rates. They fell on land, did they? That explained the six millions the Government had made over to county rates—a sheer "unadulterated gift" to the landlord, who, on the other hand, had only been taxed a few paltry hundred thousands under the succession duty, while, under Mr. Goschen's new estate duty, realty—as Mr. Provand showed earlier in the evening—had only borne 1 per cent. against 99 per cent. burden on personality. And yet, according to Mr. Chaplin, as the spokesman of the Government which had made this gigantic gift to landlordism from the Consolidated Fund, the landlord was entitled to further relief! Nothing could stay the triumphant force of such a demonstration. It was a case of "*Touché*"—there—and there—and there! Mr. Goschen came to the rescue of his discomfited colleague, but Mr. Gladstone that night was invincible—a very D'Artagnan of thrust and parry. The service to his party was no less conspicuous than the brilliancy and pictorial beauty of the assault. Parties want heartening as well as men and women, and nothing could have been more useful than Mr. Gladstone's apt pricking of the bubble of Tory Democracy at the moment of its inflation.

The House of Commons is not, as a rule, remarkable for its devotion to pure ideas. It is not at all soul-ful or ideal-ful. But 'tis wonderful how strong the influence of the Counsel of Perfection becomes whenever a party is anxious to stop a reform which has only the moderate recommendation of practicality. It was curious to watch the process of idealisation over the "One Man One Vote" debate. The whole obstructive force of the House suddenly became fiercely *intransigent*. Mr. Howorth forgot for the moment his usual part of Tory Cassandra, and became a pale enthusiast for equal electoral rights—especially for England at the expense of Ireland. Mr. Whitmore, who admirably represents the thinner kind of Oxford tradition of speech and temper, was keen for an Electorate of Mind—a fulfilment of John Stuart Mill's shadowy ideal. Mr. Courtney was

more in his place as an advocate of a logically flawless franchise. Everybody remembers the day when the Chairman of Committees left the Treasury bench, where he had been doing such exemplary work, and stood bravely up from a corner seat below the gangway to deliver a speech, which nobody understood but himself, on the merits and mysteries of proportional representation. The House did not appreciate the worship of equations, and to-day Mr. Courtney's honest face suggests the shadow of a disappointment which has affected his whole political career, and is a grave warning against the pursuit of arithmetical passions.

No one, however, was astonished when Mr. Courtney wound up the debate on "One Man One Vote" with a vehement protest against such trivial amendments of a system radically vicious. But the chief convert to the ranks of the idealists was a man of a different stamp to Mr. Courtney. Nowadays Mr. Chamberlain rarely intervenes in debate; but he has lost none of his old strength—an acid force as against the more generous alkali of Mr. Gladstone's nature—none of his wonderful simplicity and directness of speech, nothing of his keen, steady thrust, his apt malice. His tone is even harder than it was, for the gracious gift of human sympathy, never very plenteously bestowed on Mr. Chamberlain, is now completely lost to him. His speech, too, beneath its surface cleverness, was full of the grossest inconsistencies. He refused to support a reform of registration, because that would loose a "flood of new voters" on the constituencies. He would not support "one man one vote," because it only took "a little from a few," and did not open the gates of the franchise to the million. But its main point was the latter. "You see in me," said Mr. Chamberlain, in effect, "the root and branch reformer. I am for equal electoral districts, manhood suffrage, payment of members. All these things are in *my* programme (held in reserve for the moment, while my friends opposite are doing my work). Meanwhile I decline to look at these trivialities." All this was dexterous enough, and the brilliant aside to Sir William Harcourt showed Mr. Chamberlain in his real character as one of the most artful of debaters. But somehow one knows the blade that is fitted for this kind of swordsmanship. It comes from—Birmingham.

Mr. T. H. Bolton is a politician who is bound to shine. In the early days of Home Rule, when Mr. Chamberlain was in a strait betwixt two, Mr. Bolton rose to be a power in Parliament. The times were critical, but Mr. Bolton, thanks to his relations with Prince's Gardens, was able from time to time to convey to alarmed journalists, with a reassuring arch of his eyebrows, the pleasant news that the State was safe. Unlike most heroes of revolution, however, Mr. Bolton has shown the safe virtue of modesty. He has left the paths of high politics for those of London business. And he has really done very well in them. Last Wednesday, for instance, he carried an excellent amendment of the leasehold laws in the teeth of much Tory opposition and against the solid vote of the Government.

CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THE unfortunate visit of the Empress Frederick to Paris—some of the results of which are dealt with elsewhere—has thrown all other French and German news into the shade. Nevertheless, much has happened in both countries. The German Government has suddenly changed its Parliamentary attitude. In the Reichstag on Saturday, the Chancellor went out of his way to attack the Liberals and Social Democrats; and it seems generally admitted that he means to rely (like his predecessor) on the Cartell parties for support. Last week these latter were in the deepest depression; now they are jubilant at the thought that concessions to Liberalism are ended.

But—as the Liberal papers point out—the German Government cannot possibly depend for support on the Cartell alone. That party is not a majority of the Reichstag; to secure a majority, concessions must be made either to the Ultramontanes, which will disgust half the Cartell, or to the Liberals, which will estrange the whole. Of course, however, the immediate result must be the sacrifice of some of the items in the Ministerial programme. Possibly the labour reform laws may be modified, or the duty on Austrian wheat may not be lowered, or—more probably—we may see a vigorous colonial policy adapted to the taste of the readers of the *Cologne Gazette*.

In France, also, a good deal has happened. Since Thursday week the Senate has been engaged in discussing the administration of Algeria. The natives, it was alleged by M. Pauliat, are being gradually crowded out, either (like the North American Indians) by compulsory expropriation at an unfair price, or (like the Irish in the reign of Queen Elizabeth) by that substitution of individual for tribal property in which the rights of the inferior co-owners are generally ignored. The reply of M. Tirman, the Governor-General, dealt somewhat too much in generalities; and the Minister of the Interior, M. Constans, though he met some of M. Pauliat's charges satisfactorily, admitted the desirability of a commission of inquiry, which is therefore to be appointed.

The main outlines of the French Budget of 1892 have been published. The new Customs tariff will add about 38,000,000 francs to the revenue, which is to be applied in reducing, by nearly one-half, the tax on railway passengers and on fast goods traffic, which was fixed at its present amount after the war of 1870. From April 1, 1892, passenger fares will be reduced by (about) 9 per cent. in the first class, 18 per cent. in the second, and 27 per cent. in the third; while the rates for parcels, perishable goods, and cattle, will not be taxed at all—a fact which English fruit-growers will do well to note.

Other matters dealt with in the French Chambers this week are—the State grant to “communal colleges,” secondary schools chiefly maintained by the towns, and many of them not well attended, but regarded as a bulwark against clericalism (which, it was stated, controls 45 per cent. of the pupils of secondary schools in France) and as a necessary means of defence of the Republic; agricultural distress—a motion to remit for this year the land-tax on wheat-fields, owing to the severe winter, having been referred to the Budget Committee; and gambling. The Ministry has declined to interfere with the gaming-tables at Monaco, but has brought in a Bill dealing with the surplus from the “*pari-mutuel*”—the pooling system usual at French race-meetings—which, by the way, was recommended some years ago by a high authority as a palliative for the evils of the English Turf. This measure quite unexpectedly raised so many protests against betting that the Bill has been rejected, the “*pari-mutuel*” discontinued (from to-morrow) by order of M. Constans, and the book-makers threatened with prosecution. But nobody seems to expect much practical result from this sudden outburst of virtue.

The Italian Ministry have made their first decided success with the Budget statement of Signor Luzzatti on Monday last. Signor Grimaldi, the last Minister of Finance, had stated the deficit at 38,000,000 francs, and had proposed to meet it by reductions of expenditure amounting to nine millions. Signor Luzzatti estimates that further reductions may be made amounting to 36,000,000 francs; so that the surplus would be seven millions, but for the fact that the receipts will be ten millions below Signor Grimaldi's estimate. The reform of banks of issue is estimated to produce four millions. Thus the deficit of three millions is met, and a million carried to the payment of debt. “Rearrangements” of the tax on gunpowder, of the Government lotteries, and of the salt and

tobacco monopoly, and a reform of the pension system, will produce about five million francs besides, and more by-and-by. Thus six—and eventually ten—millions will be applicable to the payment of debt. The debts of the Treasury at the end of this year will amount to 480,000,000 francs.

Signori Zanardelli and Brin are doing their best to organise a regular Opposition from Signor Crispi's immediate following, and it is clear that they mean to carry on an active Parliamentary warfare against the Ministry. The *Gazzetta Piemontese*, the organ of the so-called “Piedmontese group,” has declared against Signor Crispi, though whether in the interest of the Government or of Signor Zanardelli is not clear. At any rate, the latter is at present the active leader of the Opposition. On Wednesday the Premier declared that the Triple Alliance will be maintained unimpaired.

The elections in Austria, so far as they have gone, indicate that the anti-particularist and social reform policy which Count Taaffe foreshadowed when he dissolved the Reichsrath is not very likely to meet with adequate support. Everywhere the Extremists seem to be defeating the Moderates—most conspicuously in Bohemia, where the Young Czechs, the ultra-Nationalist and Home Rule Party which originally caused Count Taaffe's change of front, have won eleven seats already from the Old Czechs, the party of moderation and compromise with the Germans. In the last Reichsrath there were two Young Czechs: in this there will be thirty. In Lower Austria the German Liberals—who were to have been the nucleus of the new Ministerialist coalition—have lost four seats to the anti-Semites, and a similar fate probably awaits them in Vienna. There are, however, four groups, more or less mutually hostile, which profess this latter creed, and not one of them seem to have any definite view as to how to carry it into practice. Apparently the small traders feel that large capitals and large enterprises are crowding them out, and attribute all their sufferings to the Jews. Among the eighteen groups or thereabouts, each more or less opposed to all the rest, which will take the place of political parties in the new Reichsrath, there is plenty of scope for ingenious but unstable combinations—necessarily on the Bismarckian principle of *do ut des*.

The new Servian Ministry has sent a circular letter to its diplomatic representatives abroad, signifying its intention to develop the national resources, and to cultivate friendly relations with its neighbours. Anti-Austrian demonstrations at Belgrade indicate pretty clearly—as our correspondent's letter this week explains—which neighbour is particularly referred to.

The Spanish Cortes have been opened. A Protectionist policy, new commercial treaties, an amnesty for political offenders, and labour legislation, are announced in the Speech from the Throne.

The Norwegian crisis is about to be temporarily ended by the formation of a “*Cabinet d'affaires*” under M. Steen, which will simply carry on the government until the general elections. The matter which caused the defeat of the Ministry was an old grievance, which made itself felt as lately as 1889, when Norway was not properly represented at the opening of the Paris Exhibition, because the King of Sweden, with gross ingratitude, objected to commemorating the French Revolution, and the (Swedish) Foreign Minister of the two countries followed his wishes rather than those of the Norwegian Government; and the Norwegian Legislature can hardly be blamed if it seeks to obviate a recurrence of such incidents. As Unionist papers have been improving the occasion, it must be pointed out that Home Rulers do not propose that the Irish Parliament shall be co-ordinate with that of Great Britain. But Sweden and Norway are nominally co-ordinate nations under the same King; only in practice foreign affairs are always managed from Sweden—to which the Norwegians not unnaturally object.

We have only space to add that the Congress of the United States has passed the Immigration Bill, strengthening the provisions against pauper immigrants, the Copyright Bill, and a bill subsidising lines of mail steamers; that much is hoped from General Mitre's arrival at Buenos Ayres next Sunday week, but that the financial situation in Argentina is again very strained; and that the news from Chili is more conflicting than ever, but that the Government accounts are apparently the least true (to speak euphemistically). It is hoped, according to the *Times* correspondent at Lisbon, that after the impending elections some sort of compromise may be arrived at.

THE WESLEYAN CENTENARY.

METHODISM has this week been celebrating the centenary of its founder's death. It has cause for gratitude, and so has the English people. For much smaller mercies we have often enough had much greater rejoicings. It is, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says, "by far the most important phenomenon of the (eighteenth) century," or, as Mr. Lecky confesses, "the religious revolution" it accomplished is "in real importance" higher than "the career of the elder Pitt and the splendid victories by land and sea that were won during his Ministry." In romance and manifest religious results it far exceeds anything the followers of Francis of Assisi, or Dominic, or Ignatius Loyola, could show within a century of their founders' deaths. If such a thing could be decided by majorities, it is certain that, while episcopacy may be the Church of England, Methodism is the Church of the English race. For the younger is the vaster society; it has 39,408 ministers, 6,122,564 Class Members, and its adherents have been estimated at from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000. The figures are not mine, and would be incredible did we not remember that, apart from the Roman, the Methodist is the strongest Church in the United States, in numbers eight times stronger than the Anglican, and is in all our colonies active, aggressive, missionary. But statistics are here the least significant of things, good only as evidence of the real magnitude of the body and of the forces it has generated and, as it were, accumulated by expanding. Wesley and Methodism are not to be measured by the method of the enumerator; the millions they have attracted are the least of their results. What may be termed their indirect achievements are much greater.

In the midst of our multitudinous religious activities, in the face of our religious temper and tendencies, we can hardly conceive what the eighteenth century was before and at the birth of Methodism. Deism was the fashion; the temper that met it was as rational as its own. The talk of the coffee-house and the *salon* justified Butler's complaint that it had come, he knew not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity was not so much as a subject of inquiry, but was at length discovered to be fictitious. A preacher to a clerical congress selected for his theme the being of God, on the ground that it was the only point on which he was sure all would agree. Religion was maintained because it was an economical yet efficient form of police. "Why," Free-thinker Collins was once asked, "are you so careful to make your servants go to church?" "I do it," he said, "that they may neither rob nor murder me." How the clergy of the day were esteemed, and what many of them were, Henry Fielding bears witness. In "Tom Jones" we see the kind of wife the parson was expected to marry, and the sort of fortune that was thought good enough for his daughter. The uniformity enforced by political passion produced religious indifference; it was more successful in expelling cultivated and convinced men from the pulpit than in finding preachers fit to follow them. And so neglect of the people lost the

people. Society was politely, the people were coarsely, licentious, but it would be hard to say that the more brutal pleasures were more vicious than the refined. To this age Wesley came as prophet and reformer. He passed through many phases, but his passion which began as a mystic's ended as an apostle's. Men of ecclesiastical minds may discuss what sort of Churchman he was, and find comfort in quoting things he said with which they agree. But the great thing about Wesley was the work he did and his reason for doing it. He did his work—not by virtue of the Church doctrine he started with, but of the faith which came to him. He believed as Luther believed, in justification by faith, as Calvin believed, though he was no Calvinist, in the necessity and sufficiency of the grace of God, as the Moravians believed, in conversion and consecration of spirit, and by right of the faith he held and the goodly succession in which he stood he did the work of an apostle. The criticism of the day did not touch him; his apologetic was the fact and the experience of the living man. "Beat," he said to the critics, "on the sack of Anaxagoras. But you can no more hurt my evidence of Christianity than the giant could hurt the spirit of that wise man." "One thing I know: I was blind and now I see." He lived in the region of realities; neither literary nor social fashions touched or troubled him. Rousseau was to him a "coxcomb," and "a cynic all over;" and "his brother-infidel Voltaire" was the same. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "how hard it is to be shallow enough for a polite audience!" But to spend one's life in arguing for the truth of religion was but to waste time and engender doubt; evils were to be cured, men were to be saved; to do these things was the work of religion. And in his hands it did both. "Though I am always in haste," he said, "I am never in a hurry"; and he proved it by his labours. And never were labours more abundant or more fruitful. Wesley may be said to have found England full of unconquered heathenism, and to have left it, if not changed and Christian, yet active and alive to religion as it had not been for a century and a half—if, indeed, ever before. It is a small matter whether the work was done with or without episcopal sanction; the remarkable thing is, it was done, and done evidently with the sanction and by the blessing of God.

Of course, such work as his could not be done amid universal applause. The mob assailed him, the press satirised him, the clergy harassed him, fortune and floods impeded him, calumny defamed him, but he went straight forward, possessed with as signal serenity of temper as capacity for work. Butler told him that he once thought he was a well-meaning man, but he had now found him out, and could think so no more. "Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing—a very horrid thing." To Warburton, he was an example of "the successful impostors which have set out in all the blaze of fanaticism," and "completed their schemes amidst the cool depths and stillness of politics." The comparison he suggested between Loyola and Wesley, Bishop Lavington worked out. But no man ever cared less for censure or criticism, wherever it came from; and though he was the most convinced of men, he was anything but the narrowest. He was more generous than the broadest of that latitudinarian day. "Orthodoxy or right opinion," he said, "is but a very slender part of religion, if any part at all." Conscience was to him "the Son of God in man," or "the Spirit of Christ," "the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." Within his large charity Marcus Antoninus and the virtuous heathen, Loyola and the Roman Catholics, Thomas Firmin and the Socinians, had a place, for the "light of Christ shines in different degrees under different dispensations." Yet this large charity did not allow him to prophesy smooth things. He preached as a man who believed in everlasting

penalties, in the reality of hell fire, in the need of conversion. And the reality of his faith stands attested by the multitude and sincerity of his converts. False men do not create martyrs; veracity in nature and belief can alone work miracles in the sphere of spirit and conduct. The Cornish miners, the Lincolnshire labourers, the men of the Midland potteries and the Northern Vales were not of the kind to be changed by a man who seemed and was not real. And they became as he was: had to face riot, magisterial lawlessness, and violence—social blame for what ought to have earned social praise. Once when told that a whole waggon-load of Methodists had been brought before a justice of the peace, he inquired as to the charge, and was answered—"Why, they pretended to be better than other people; and besides, they prayed from morning to night." It is surely claim enough for immortality that he contributed to make men worthy of so good a reproach.

Wesley has been much praised as an organiser; and here he indeed displayed genius. He had the audacity of the greatest soldiers. He started a High Churchman, and he ended as he began, only with his political made into a more spiritual theory. He had one mark of genius: he allowed himself to be educated by facts, and he understood the facts that educated. Though no bishop in the legal sense, he knew himself to be one in the spiritual, and though only a Presbyterian, he ordained a bishop for America, and constituted his Society there what it remains to this day—an Episcopal Church. His class meeting is a wonderful agency for its purpose—is able to fulfil functions of direction and discipline so as to make the whole body a homogeneous organism. Perhaps there is no body in the world which possesses as much of unity in matters of faith and discipline, of feeling and purpose; and this unity is but the least of the fruits which it owes to the organising genius of Wesley.

What Methodism has done, indirectly, for the English people is too large a question to be here discussed. One thing is evident—it did more to conquer the unbelief and irreligion of the eighteenth century than all the rational apologetics of the time. It created a new spirit in the English Church, a new temper in the English people, a mind that so revolted from the prevailing cold and arid deism, with its praise of a natural religion which Nature never knew, that disproof of it became superfluous. It kindled, too, such a spirit of philanthropy, such a sense of duty to the miserable, such an enthusiasm for humanity, that through it came the reform of manners, the emancipation of the slave, the more helpful relief of poverty, pity for the criminal, and improvement of the prisons. He said, "Of all the seats of woe on this side hell, few, I suppose, exceed, or even equal, Newgate. If any region of horror could exceed it a few years ago, Newgate in Bristol did; so great was the filth, the stench, the misery, and wickedness, which shocked all who had a spark of humanity left;" and his words and works, with the spirit, the love of souls born in crime, he created, helped to bring round a healthier state and a happier policy. He contributed, too, new elements to the public well-being. The end of his century was a period of revolution. That England escaped the fate of France was in no small measure due to Wesley and his Methodism. The new spirit of obedience and morals he evoked among the people, of duty and service he helped to create in the upper classes, made it easier to England to pursue her path of calm and orderly change while revolution convulsed her more brilliant neighbour. But of all his services, his greatest was to make a system so splendidly adapted to the English people in their century of greatest expansion. The power of the Anglican Church in England is immense; it would indeed be a marvel were it otherwise. She possesses enormous wealth, buildings that appeal to the imagination of the people and are symbols of their proudest past; for centuries

she has had in her hands the education of statesmen and scholars, the resources of ancient universities and famous schools, and has been able to form and to hold the richest and most influential aristocracy in the world; and it would be little else than a miracle if in England, with all her privileges and all her power, she were not strong and great. But, in the greater England that lies beyond the seas, she must yield the palm of energy, efficiency, and the honour that belongs to the highest service to the Church that may be described as her latest child. In creating a society that has so powerfully contributed to keep the English people in the century of their vastest diffusion, greatest increase, and largest enterprise, still Christian and still progressive and order-loving, John Wesley accomplished a work that entitles him to the perpetual honour of our race and our kind.

A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

THE PEDAGOGUE AT LARGE.

ART is going off to school. She took to consorting with respectable children, and the eye of the Inspector lit upon her, and by this time she is well within the shadow of the prison-house. A week or two back Miss Annie S. Swan (a novelist herself, *nigroque simillima cygno*) stood up and advocated the founding of a school of literary method, advising parents at the same time to cultivate the gift of story-writing in their children. So "story-teller" will perhaps become a word of honour in our nurseries and the child's first lie reviewed in the parlour as Fiction with a Purpose. At the time, these proposals seemed to us to escape their own notice being comic; but "we're thinking now of Annie"—if Miss Swan will pardon the quotation—as a lady who understands the age in which she lives. Many signs have convinced us, and among them a protest in last Tuesday's *Times* (signed by Sir Arthur Blomfield, Messrs. Norman Shaw, George Bodley, Basil Champneys, T. G. Jackson, Alma Tadema, Onslow Ford, and others) against a Bill for making Architecture a close profession like Law, Physic, and Divinity. In other words, that which Miss Swan proposes for Fiction is in the case of Architecture to be developed to the extreme limit of absurdity and enforced by Act of Parliament. Art is to be a general term for a number of professions, taught at school and duly licensed.

The protest is a notable document, and the men who signed it deserve well of their fellows. For indeed it is time that this nonsense were stopped, or the pedagogic institutions of this country will be making all our artists small "by degrees." There is a notion abroad that a picture, a history, a novel, a statue, are very like a pudding—give any man the ingredients and he can be taught to make them. The British papa reads that Mr. Millais is made Sir John and earns a respectable income by "flinging on tints," or that Mr. Rider Haggard makes money "out of his head" by cock and bull stories about Africa, and at once he falls to asking why his Jacky and Tommy and Billy cannot find their living in this way. Then comes the schoolmaster, saying "to be sure, they can: Art may be taught." And very soon the corollary follows—"Good Art is Art based on good instruction. To ensure good instruction and to help the public to discern between good Art and bad, we must have examining-bodies and distribute medals, tickets, diplomas, licences." The plague is on us: the schoolmaster is turned loose, and the fair enclosures of the arts are filled with his braying and the kicking of his heels.

Is it too late to whisper in the ear of the British papa that all this is vanity: that his Jacky—"the small apple-eating animal whom we know"—will never learn from hand-books or pedagogues how to write a great novel or paint a great picture? He will readily assent to the proposition that a poet is born, not made: in the first place because it has all

the authority that comes of frequent repetition in a language with which he is imperfectly acquainted; and, secondly, because he wants Jacky, after all, to be a bit of a man and not a nonsensical half-and-half creature who rhymes. But novel-writing, for instance, is another affair altogether. Mr. Rider Haggard (he hears) is the son of an east-country squire, and his family is quite willing to own him. Why should not Jacky become a certificated novelist?

The answer, of course, is (to use Mr. Whistler's brief sentence) that Art happens. A boy afflicted with it can no more help it than he can help that equally rare disease, St. Vitus's dance; and Jacky may accumulate certificates, licences, diplomas enough to make himself a suit of clothes, yet they shall avail him nothing. You may swish the Latin declensions into him, but never a sense of colour or the gift of narrative. And we are emboldened to lay stress on this obvious truth because we have just come across a book that illustrates the point very neatly, and in a case that must be familiar to every householder.

Every householder knows, and believes himself able to appreciate, Dickens. Within the last few days two books have been published about this author—"The Childhood and Youth of Dickens," by Mr. Robert Langton (Hutchinson & Co.), and Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's "History of Pickwick: an Account of its Characters, Localities, Allusions, and Illustrations" (Chapman & Hall). It is with the former that we are concerned just now: for it follows with a tender interest every incident that can be traced in the education of the most popular novelist of the century, the man of all others that papa would like his Jacky to resemble. And this education, as everybody knows, the great boy picked up by running wild. "In the case of Mr. Dickens," says Bagehot, "it would have been absurd to shut up his observant youth within the walls of a college. They would have taught him nothing about Mrs. Gamp there; Sam Weller took no degree. The kind of life fitted to develop the power of apprehensive observation is a brooding life in stirring scenes . . ." And this is what Mr. Langton preaches,—not (be it remarked) leaving us to infer that Dickens was a great novelist in spite of his unfortunate and nomadic youth; but that his genius was actually helped by it. We may seem to use a hasty generalisation if we say that all great novelists depend for the most part on the impressions bitten into their life between the ages of eight and twenty-one. And yet in the case of Dickens, great and varied and prolific as he was, the evidence that he drew on these years as he drew on no other period of his life, is astounding. Mr. Langton himself, good man, is so astounded that he punctuates his book with notes of exclamation in place of full-stops. Dickens was born in a small house in a terrace at Portsea; before he was five his parents moved to a small house in a small terrace at Chatham, then to a yet smaller house in the same town, then to small houses in Camden Town and Gower Street, London; and then his father was taken to a debtor's prison, and Charles was sent to a blacking manufactory. That is all. His education, or, rather, that part of it which was imparted during school hours, was quite insignificant. In later years he did his fair share of travel, but the neighbourhood of Chatham (with adjacent Rochester), and those parts of London which he learnt as a book during his father's imprisonment, supply most of the scenery of "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," "The Mudfog Papers," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," "The Seven Poor Travellers," "Little Dorrit," "The Uncommercial Traveller," "Great Expectations," and "Edwin Drood," besides innumerable pages in his other works. Names like Weller, Peggoty, Dorrit, Pordage, Drood, Waghorn, Sowster, "Old Cheeseman," "Tom-all-alone's," "Old Clem," "Satis House," all belong to that period, and may be traced back in many cases to the grave-yard by Rochester Cathedral; and so

on, and so on, all proving, in Mr. Langton's pages, that Dickens owed a vast deal to his own childhood, but little to his schoolmasters. For, indeed, by playing truant for a day you will pick up more experience than you can find in a month's schooling; and for Dickens such experience was better in kind. Sainte-Beuve grew to look on all experience as a great volume, wherein it was all one if you read in Chapter XX., which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter XXIX., which is hearing the band play in the gardens. Only to the novelist the differential calculus, which but slightly sways human emotions, is a small matter compared to the band in the gardens. And the moral seems that the father who wishes his son to be a novelist should pay his creditors some inadequate shillings in every pound and send his boy into a blacking manufactory. Now whether it is worth while going through so much to attain so little, as Dickens's own charity-schoolboy said of the alphabet, is a question. And even if the attainment be great and its place in the sum of human work conspicuous: if the novelist, like the old playwright,

"Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit,"

it is obviously foolish to put him to school under Chrysippus and Crantor in the hope that they may teach to say wiser things than they themselves utter. It holds of all Art that, the schoolmaster being discovered among its garden-beds, he must be kicked out. But, while we eject the schoolmaster, we should remember that Art herself has been to blame. She was once mated with Social Disrepute. But somebody cried out, "What, no soap?" So he died, and she very imprudently married the Brompton Philistine. And of course there came to the wedding the Great Panjandrum himself, with the little button a-top (see Randolph Caldecott's drawing). So is Art's inheritance wasted and given over to the Professor and the wild ass.

BIG SHIPS AND BIG GUNS.

THE launches of last week were the theme at the time of an outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the press. The vast size of the *Royal Sovereign* seemed to fill the critics with admiration, and few paused to ask whether size is everything in a man-of-war. There are some questions, however, which must be asked, and if possible answered. What principle dominated the design of the *Royal Sovereign* and her consorts? Is that principle sound? Has it ever been properly considered? or, like Topsy, has the monster simply "grewed"? Speed and manœuvring power, which many practical sailors regard as of the first importance, clearly have not been the ruling factors. The promised 17 knots on the measured mile—barely 15 for purposes of war—is obtainable on a less displacement; extreme handiness in action will scarcely be attained by a ship 380 feet long. Armour protection will not serve to account ultimately for the 14,000 tons, since the weight of armour depends mainly on the size and distribution of the objects to be protected. A ship is not built to carry armour, but to convey something which armour is required to protect.

The process of exhaustion can lead only to one conclusion. We are concentrating nearly 115,000 tons, and, in the long run, considerably over £8,000,000 sterling, upon eight vessels, solely because it has been accepted (1) that a 67-ton gun represents the necessary standard of armament, and (2) that it is essential to place four such guns on a single ship. Given these two propositions, all the rest follows logically enough. The naval architect is confronted with enormous deck-loads; the monster guns and the machinery required to move and load them must be adequately protected; a lurking disbelief in the big gun creates the demand for a large auxiliary armament; the ship

must be as unsinkable as possible; engines and boilers must be provided to propel the whole mass at a reasonable speed. The *Royal Sovereign* results; and while we may well admire the skill with which the problem has been worked out, it is possible to question the data, and to doubt whether those data have ever been properly considered at all. The naval architect is not to blame if the data, with which he *ought* to have nothing to do, are incorrect.

The whole policy for which the country is paying so heavily thus rests on the truth of two propositions. If either is false, that policy stands condemned. Select a lighter gun as the standard, or admit that at most the ship should carry but two 67-ton guns, and the *Royal Sovereign* must be regarded as a clever but costly *tour de force*—an exaggerated Eiffel Tower. The issue is simple, and the question is not by any means beyond the comprehension of the lay mind.

In deliberately adopting the 67-ton gun as the standard armament of a battle-ship, the object must be either to obtain armour penetration or what is called "shell-power"—i.e., the possibility of bursting a large shell inside an enemy's vessel. As regards the first, the 10-inch gun of 32 tons would penetrate the armour of the *Royal Sovereign* anywhere at short range, and exceedingly few naval officers believe in the use of long-range fire in fleet actions. As regards the second, a 500 lb. shell appears to suffice for all purposes, if any value attaches to the opinion of Lord Dundonald, derived from actual experience with projectiles not one-seventh of this weight. The long peace has induced forgetfulness of the effects of shell-fire, of which the advocates of monstrosities have taken full advantage. The incidental drawbacks of the exaggerated gun—relative slowness of fire and absolute dependence upon machinery—appeal to every practical mind. It is true that Lord G. Hamilton has lately informed the House of Commons and the country that "hydraulic mechanism . . . is exceedingly simple"; but he unfortunately omitted to state that during the recent severe weather the guns thus worked were as a matter of fact hopelessly out of action, while the mere chance injury to a connecting pipe suffices to disable them for hours. Machinery is an admirable ally; we may even depend upon it absolutely to produce results unattainable in any other way; but for purposes of war, it is essential to be able, in the ultimate resort, to fall back upon man-power. The perversity of human nature created the craze for monstrous guns; and machinery, in rendering the handling of such guns technically possible, has assisted in obscuring real military requirements.

The second proposition is of another kind; but the task of showing that any advantage accrues from the aggregation of enormous guns on a single ship, which, for that reason, becomes itself a huge target, would be sufficiently difficult. Dispersion is the order of the day, and the principle is as applicable on sea as on land. Speed and handiness, flexibility and manœuvring power, are rightly held up as the requirements of naval war; and even if the necessity for a 67-ton gun is admitted, it may well be questioned whether two vessels, each carrying one such gun, would not be far more dangerous antagonists than a *Royal Sovereign* over-loaded with four. At least, two vessels cannot be disabled by a single lucky shell, or sent to the bottom by a single Whitehead discharged from a torpedo boat which had found its opportunity, or by a single blow from the ram. The costly eggs are not all in one enormous basket, certain to suffer in proportion to its size.

The policy of placing four huge guns on a single vessel has arisen partly by accident and partly because Italy embarked on a mistaken course of shipbuilding, and Great Britain, in this as in other matters, has of late years shown a singular tendency to accept the lead of other Powers. The designs of the *Duilio* of 1876 and the *Dandolo* of 1878, both over 11,000 tons, were determined—and spoiled—by the decision that each should carry four 100-ton guns. We

followed suit with the *Inflexible*, of nearly 12,000 tons, in which also the ship was sacrificed to the 80-ton guns, with most unfortunate results. The Italians have gone on to the *Italia* and *Lepanto*, of more than 13,000 tons, which nevertheless have no side-armour protection whatever, except for their four heavy guns, and present huge targets to be cut to pieces by *any* gun that can reach them. We have our *Admiral* class, of which the less said the better. If any proof of the utter confusion of ideas as regards the first principles of ship design were wanting, the *Royal Arthur*, launched on the same day as the *Royal Sovereign*, supplies it. Here is a ship carrying no armour, and obviously not intended to engage heavily armoured vessels. Yet it is considered necessary to provide her with one gun capable of piercing nearly 19 in. of wrought iron at a thousand yards; while, to complete the irony of the situation, this gun is placed at the stern, and could only be used by turning a naked side to the enemy, or coaxing him to give chase.

The time has surely arrived for a return to first principles, and an adequate discussion of what modern requirements really are. The ship must no longer be sacrificed to guns of unnecessary weight, undesirably concentrated, and absolutely dependent on machinery for their working. Other considerations must receive due weight, and the many disadvantages entailed by the monster gun must be brought home to its remaining advocates. It is not the business of the naval constructor—whose mind naturally leans towards monumentalism and machinery—to lay down the data of the design of a ship of war, but of the men who will be called upon to fight her. And if the question is fairly examined, it will be found that, until a new metal for armour-plates has been invented, there is no need for the monster gun, nor for the 14,000-ton ship which has directly resulted from it.

A RAMBLER IN LONDON.

XXXII.—A GOVERNESSES' AGENCY.

THE agency is across the way, two doors to the right, up a stair. Without going to my window I can always tell when another governess has arrived in search of a situation, for ours is a quiet little street, and when they knock I hear them. Not a knocker in the street is disturbed without my hearing it. Governesses' knocks are commonplace; bolder, say, than a lover's, and less peremptory than a beggar's; but nevertheless I usually say to myself, "Another governess," when I hear a rap-tap-tap; and my warrant is that the governesses come and go in our street all day long. Sometimes I sit at my window and watch them. It would make you quite melancholy to know how many governesses knock at that door across the way between the hours of ten and six.

I have never been across the way myself. Only the other day it struck me as a curious thing, and characteristic less of me than of London life generally, that I have lived for years in this street and never been on the other side of it. So, as my eyes are not very good, I cannot tell what the notice says that is attached to the door-bell of the agency. Perhaps it is an unnecessary reminder to the governesses that they are not persons of any consequence, and must therefore wait patiently down there until it pleases some magnate to descend and open the door. That is one of my theories, and it has grown since I noticed long ago that the governesses have to knock several times before the door opens. I have thought that they would get an answer sooner if they imitated the knock of the telegraph boy, and I have pictured the indignation of those who run the agency on discovering that their sly visitor was nothing better than a trumpery governess. Fancy a governess's not being

willing to wait at the door as long as an agency likes! Another idea of mine about the notice is that it says governesses can only be admitted in batches of not less than three. I observe that one governess arrives and knocks and waits, that a second governess joins her and knocks and waits, and that a third appears before the door opens. It may be, however, that the governesses are requested to wait (or to go away if they like, for one governess more or less does not matter) until the door opens to some person of real importance. Other people than those of the agency live on that stair, and sometimes they open the door to come out or to go in while the governesses are waiting. Then the lucky governesses hold the door open with their foot, and ask each other (I see them) whether they dare enter.

Do you know anything about governesses, except that your married sister keeps one who is said to be quite respectable? Probably you do not. The subject is scarcely worth inquiring into—or, stop, there is one thing you know about them: that they are easily got. Where to get a really good chop is one of the problems of life, but where to get a really good governess—pooh! they are as common as cabbages in a country garden, and almost as inexpensive. The novelists know very little about governesses. When I was young I used to read novellettes that had governesses for heroines. (Of course I would not admit this in a signed article.) The governess was nearly always suspected of stealing a bracelet, and they searched her box (governesses have only one box), and there was the bracelet. But, you know, she did not really steal it, for she was heir to the estate all the time. The one thing I knew about governesses in those days was that they and their haughty mistress would change places in Chapter Twelve and Last. Nowadays my novels are in three volumes, and before I have finished the first my eldest daughter takes them all back to Mudie's. Nevertheless, I read enough to see that the governess in forty-eight chapters is not unlike the governess in twelve. She is less frequently charged with theft, and she is sometimes not the heir, but the eldest son always falls in love with her and his mother calls her a creature, and then to the admiration of all she refuses the eldest son's hand, which results in her being requested by the mother to take it.

Now I love the novelists, and admire their first volumes, but after sitting for an hour at my window I have thought that governesses are the one class of human beings whom they do not have, as the saying is, at their finger-ends. Hundreds of these governesses have been in "places" ere now, many of them in half a dozen places, but none has married the eldest son. Perhaps the son was willing, but it may have been that when the governess said she would not look at him until his mother yielded, the mother calmly let her go. So instead of marrying the eldest son she lost her place and returned to my street. This, however, implies that the novelists do not understand the worldly woman of society, which is not credible—they have been drawing her for so long. Perhaps the eldest son did not propose at all; only kissed her on the stair, and wondered why she was crying next day. Often, I fear, the eldest son does not even pay her that attention; she is not sufficiently pretty. Yet, though the governesses I see are not so beautiful as those I read about, they are nice to look at, except when they are sad. They are quite as pretty as the women I see from my penny seat at Rotten Row, and they look lovely the day after I have been to a fashionable theatre, where the ugliest women in London are to be seen nightly all ablaze with diamonds.

You will ask me, who never stepped across the street to read the notice near the agency door, how I know that many of these governesses have been in places before. I know it by the way they walk up to the knocker, by their business-like method of entering and leaving the agency, by the calmness with which they wait until the door opens, by the cynicism on their faces. They know that they are to

be got cheap, and they are a little bitter, but they talk politely to each other, though they have never met before, and even make merry. Oh, you noisy ones who lose your heads in ecstasy over the bravery of this soldier and that, or over explorers who have penetrated Africa, if you could only know how brave these girls are! Ah! and not all girls, for many of them are worn women. I have heard them condemned for dressing tastefully, the younger ones even coquettishly. Why, it is part of their bravery. They have not sunk under their trials, but kept their little shoulders erect, and borne the burden courageously. They are making the best of their circumstances, looking sorrow in the face and defying it with a pretty bonnet. These three at the door just now do not know what will happen unless they get a place shortly; but that is not what they are telling each other. They are laughing, gossiping, I dare swear, about the most inconsiderable trifles. They are keeping their troubles to themselves. If you do not believe me, watch them after they have separated. One droops her head now— But I only ask you to watch them if you choose. I have given up watching them when they leave the agency. It makes me melancholy.

Some come for a place who have not been governesses before. There was a pale woman to-day, who, I feel convinced, has lately been wearing widow's weeds. Perhaps she took them off because people want their governesses to be bright. She came out of the agency with a smile on her face, and then it disappeared suddenly, as if she had remembered something. I suppose she had been smiling in the agency that they might be favourably impressed. My dear sir, you who jest about the little governess, was there nothing brave in that? We have twenty romances a day at the door of the governesses' agency. Hardly had the pale woman gone when a girl of eighteen or thereabouts walked down the street with a boy some years younger. When they came to the door I knew they were looking for, they gave each other a quick glance and passed on. After a little the girl came back alone and knocked timidly, and she was very frightened. But the boy stood near and nodded to her, and though I suppose he could not have been more than fourteen, and was only her brother, every nod said that he loved her, and you have no idea how much strength it seemed to give her. He had to wait ten minutes for her, and I saw him brush his eyes with his sleeve and then knit his lips. He was making up his mind, I believe, to be a man as quickly as he could. When she came out he said something to her that made her smile. I suppose it was about the house he was to take and she was to be mistress of by-and-by. Then they were gone, and how that little comedy is to end I shall never know, for not all the acts can be played in this street. But I see enough to know that if the novelists fail in stories about governesses, it is not for lack of heroines.

WHITECHAPEL AS A PORTENT.

SADLER has gone off into space "waving goodbye with his hat," and the latest Whitechapel murder reverts to the chronic condition of mystery. The supposition that Sadler was the author of this latest crime promised to take it out of the category of Whitechapel murders. The certainty that he was not puts it into the category again. From first to last the business must have taken less than five minutes; and this shows the practised hand. That, however, is not the point. All speculations about the murderer are profitless, except such as are ways and means of detection. It may still profit to speak about his victims. The catching and hanging of him would be a relief to the public conscience, and it would add to the security of the streets, but it would do nothing towards the solution of that problem